



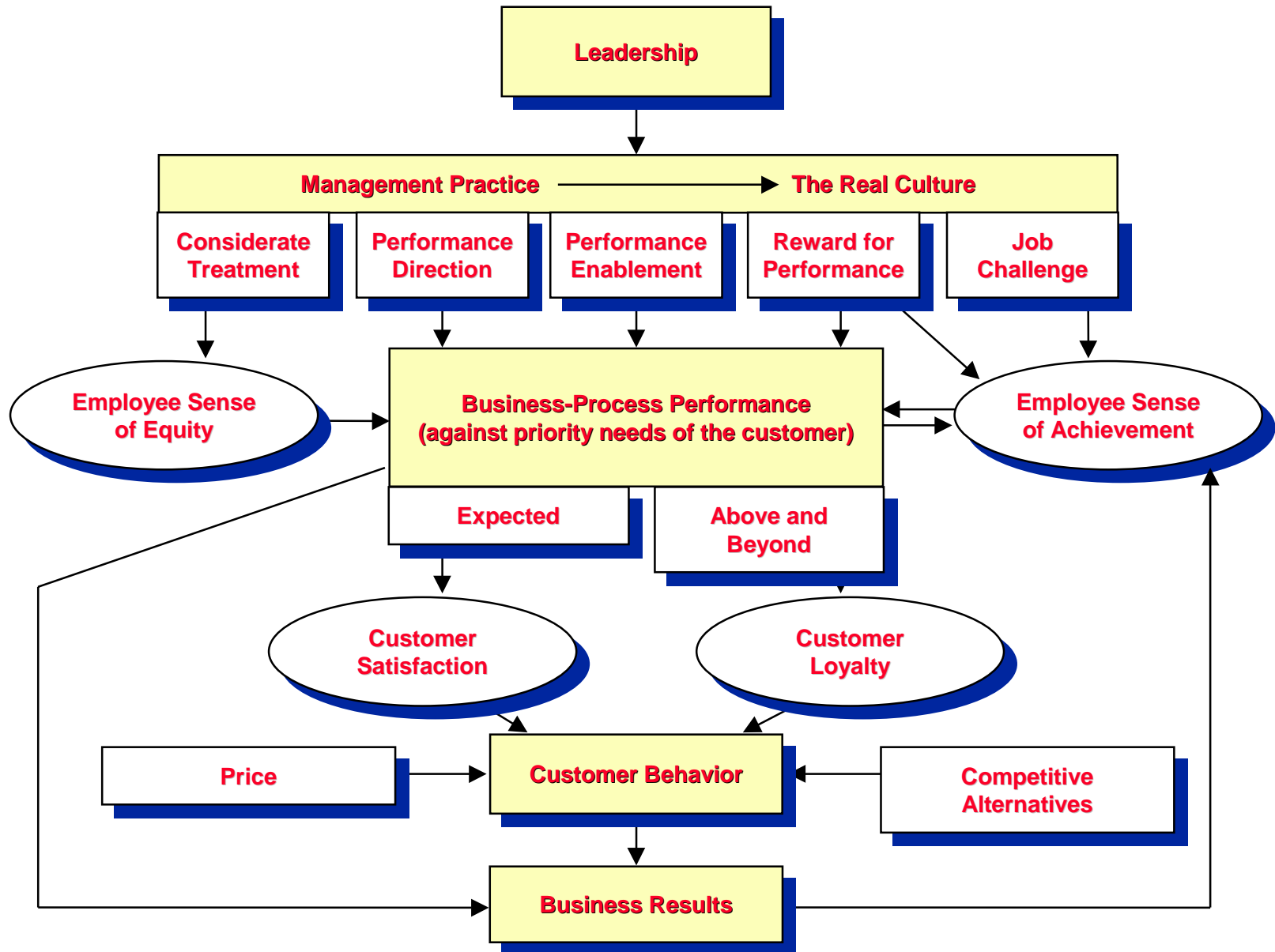
## Overall USPTO Results

November, 2000

Prepared by



# The Sirota Alignment Model<sup>©</sup>



# Survey Methodology

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**When:** October, 2000

**How:** Mainly Web-based survey; Small amount of paper

**Who:** All employees

**Confidentiality:** Employees guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity

**Response Rate:** Approximately 6288 eligible, 3867 responded = 62% response rate

# Data Interpretation Guidelines

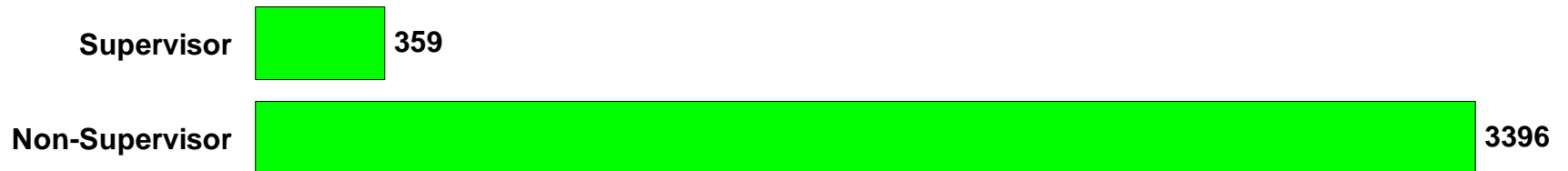
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## Response Profile

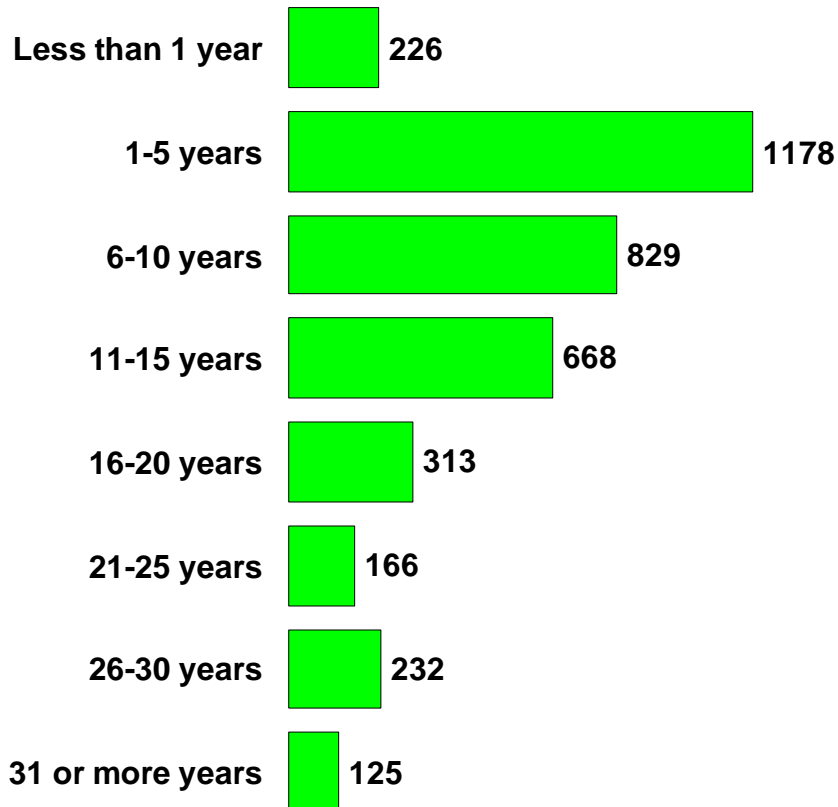
	<u>Favorable</u>	<u>Neutral</u>	<u>Unfavorable</u>
Very Favorable	=/> 75		
Favorable	65-74		
Moderately Favorable	51-64		<20
Lukewarm	=/< 50		<20
Mixed-Warning			20-29
Unfavorable			>=30
Very Unfavorable			>=40

# Demographics

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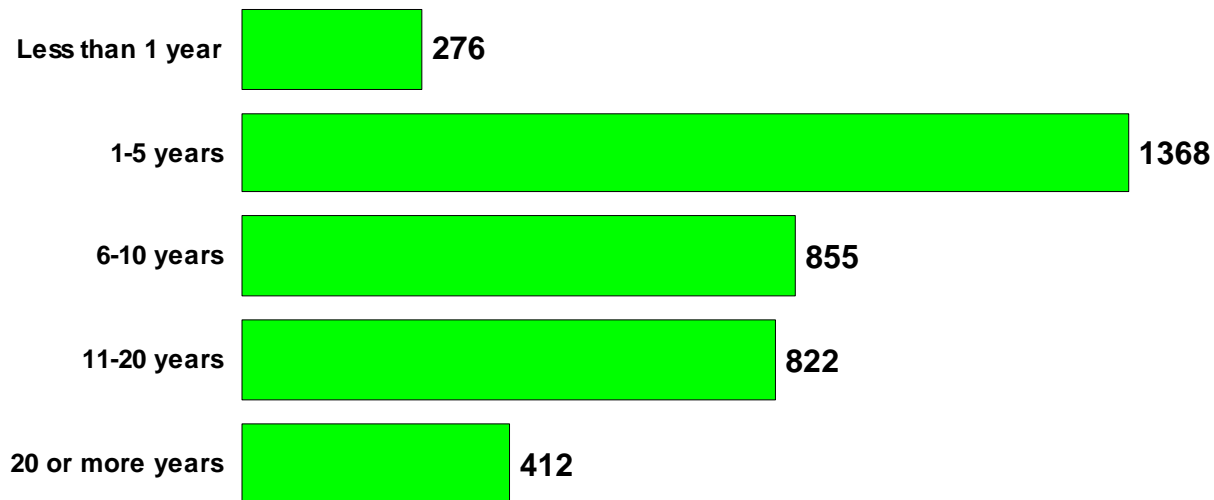
## Tenure Government Employee



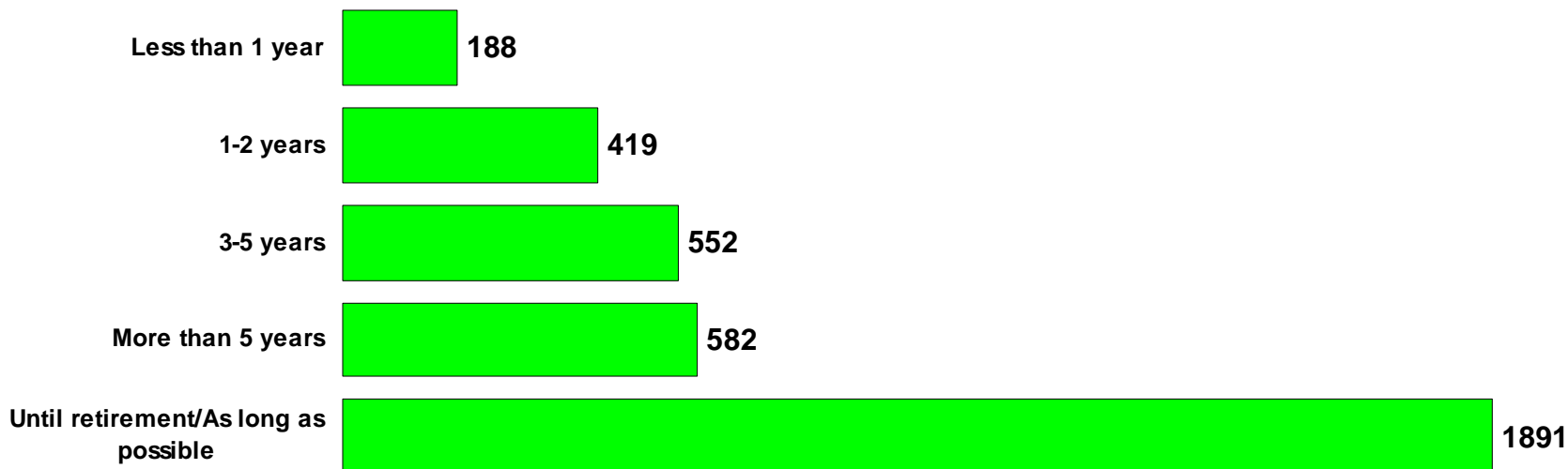
# Demographics

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## How long worked in USPTO



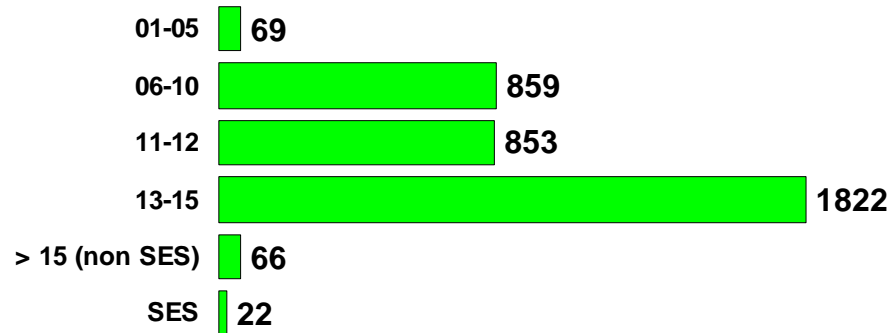
## Plan to work at USPTO



# Demographics

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## Grade



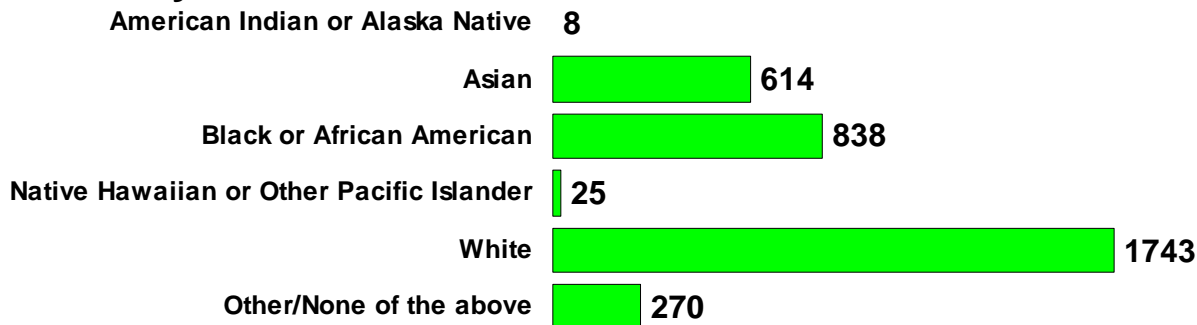
## Gender



## Hispanic/Non-Hispanic



## Ethnicity



## Survey Items with Trend Data

		% Favorable		
		<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Change</u>
Q101	<b>Satisfaction with job</b>	48	58	+10
Q102	<b>Overall satisfaction in USPTO</b>	38	49	+11
*Q80	I can take advantage of family/personal life policies	36	73	+37
*Q62	Employees receive information in timely manner	25	50	+25
Q67	Receive training and guidance in providing customer service	30	55	+25
*Q79	Spirit of cooperation and teamwork exists in immediate work unit	42	66	+24
*Q91	Supervisor provides fair/accurate progress review/ratings of performance	51	75	+24
*Q4	Understand the mission, vision, and values of values of USPTO	56	80	+24
Q31	Supervisors understand and support personal responsibilities	48	71	+23
Q66	Employees provided with training for new technologies and tools	40	61	+21
Q74	Supervisors/team leaders receptive to change	28	49	+21
Q12	Programs that help with work and family responsibilities	50	71	+21
Q51	Products, services, work processes designed to meet customer needs/expectations	50	69	+19
*Q50	Good understanding of customers	70	87	+17

\* Similar but not exact wording in last survey



## Survey Items with Trend Data

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		% Favorable		
		<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Change</u>
*Q97	Receive help from supervisor for work-related problems	61	78	+17
*Q3	How would you rate the USPTO as a place to work, compared with other employers	31	49	+17
Q52	Can link customers' feedback and complaints to employees who can act on information	30	46	+16
Q69	Training and career development opportunities are allocated fairly	32	48	+16
Q100	Quality of job being done by immediate supervisor	55	71	+16
*Q92	Supervisor provides constructive suggestions to improve job performance	51	66	+15
Q30	Leaders demonstrate quality is important	32	47	+15
Q118	Teams are used for organizational goals	42	56	+14
Q29	Leaders follow-up on employee suggestions	21	35	+14
Q43	People treat each other with respect	57	70	+13
Q61	Employees are kept informed on issues affecting their jobs	41	54	+13
Q65	Employees receive training needed to do job	43	56	+13
*Q64	Employees have job-relevant knowledge/skills necessary to accomplish organizational goals	54	66	+12
*Q70	I have appropriate tools to perform job well	50	62	+12

\* Similar but not exact wording in last survey

## Survey Items with Trend Data

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		% Favorable		
		<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Change</u>
*Q93	Supervisor communicates what's expected in terms of job performance	65	77	+12
Q119	Employees are rewarded for working in teams	20	31	+11
Q76	Creativity/innovation are rewarded	20	30	+10
Q60	Distribution of work is fair	40	50	+10
Q89	Involvement in decisions that affect work	25	35	+10
Q120	Employees participate in cross-functional teams	25	34	+9
Q90	Overall quality of work being done in work unit	61	70	+9
*Q26	Leader(s) communicate the Business Unit's mission, vision, and values	47	55	+8
Q41	Disciplinary actions are applied fairly	34	42	+8
Q39	Recognition for doing a good job	32	38	+6
Q85	Work provides a feeling of personal accomplishment	56	62	+6
Q42	Individual differences are respected/valued	63	68	+5
Q55	Service goals aimed at meeting customer expectations	66	71	+5
Q59	Current production system allows employees time to produce quality products	17	22	+5
Q58	Reasonable amount of work allows employees to provide high quality products/services	23	27	+4
*Q86	Enjoy the kind of work I do	66	70	+4

\* Similar but not exact wording in last survey

## Survey Items with Trend Data

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		% Favorable		
		<u>1998</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>Change</u>
Q37	Rewarded for providing high quality products/services	29	32	+3
*Q77	Risk taking encouraged	16	18	+2
Q7	Different parts of USPTO cooperate for high quality performance	32	32	0
*Q36	Opportunities for advancement	51	51	0
Q13	Programs that encourage good health practices are supported	66	64	-2

46 of the 49 comparable survey questions improved from 1998. 33 items improved 10 percentage points or more.

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- **Overall Satisfaction - Key Driver Analysis**

- **Tenure - Attrition**

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- **Treatment of Others in My Business Unit**

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- **About Supervision**

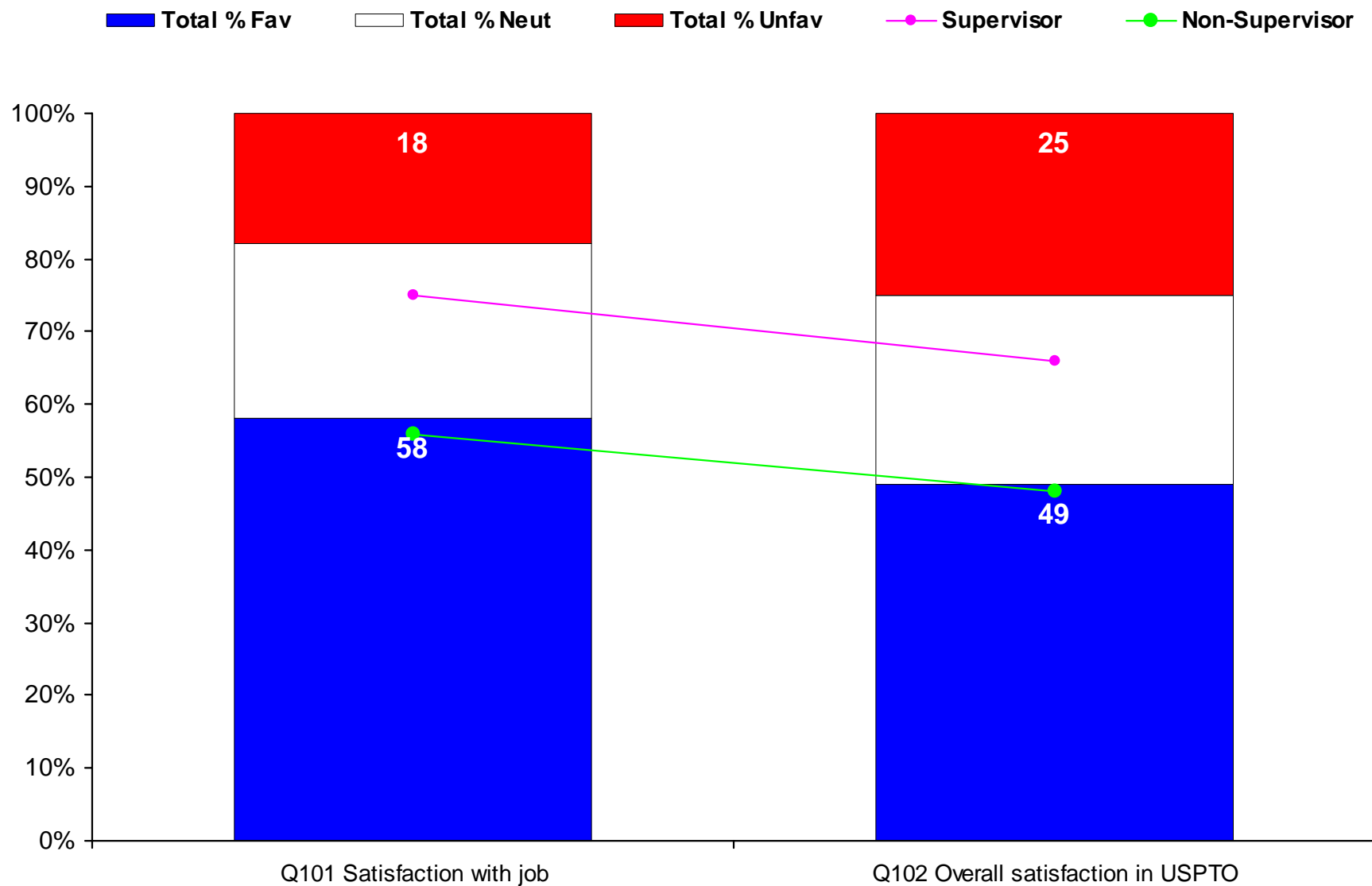
- **NPR Issues**

- **Final Summary**

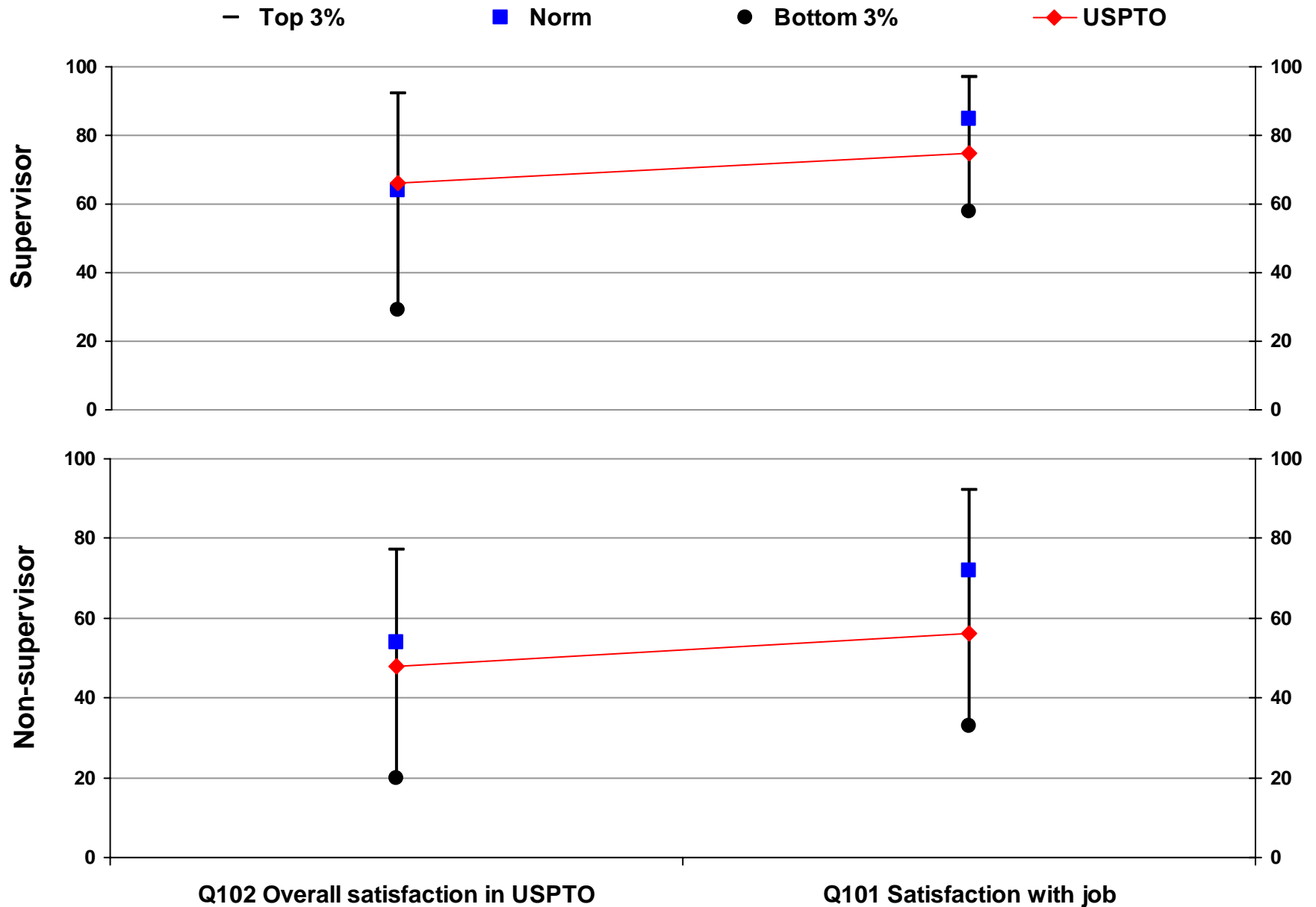
- **Write-Ins**

# Overall Satisfaction

## Ranked by Total % Favorable



# Overall Satisfaction - Normative Comparison



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# Overview of Analyses

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- **Purpose:** To determine the key drivers of employees' overall satisfaction with their jobs and in the USPTO
  
- **Methods:**
  - Correlation analysis
  - Factor analysis
  
- **Items assessing employees' overall satisfaction in the USPTO (Q102) and satisfaction with their jobs (Q101) were highly correlated ( $r=.77$ ).**



# Key Drivers of Q101 - Correlation Analysis

■ The following items were strongly correlated with employees' satisfaction with their jobs

	<u>r</u>	<u>%F</u>	<u>%N</u>	<u>%UF</u>
Q88 Proud of work I do	0.51	77	15	8
Q86 Enjoy the work I do	0.54	70	18	11
Q71 Job effectively utilizes my skills and abilities	0.52	64	15	21
Q16 Proud to work for USPTO	0.61	63	25	11
Q85 Work provides feeling of personal accomplishment	0.60	62	20	19
Q87 Satisfied with work variety	0.53	61	18	21
Q3 Rate USPTO as place to work, compared with other employers	0.61	49	33	18
Q73 My opinions count	0.52	44	25	31
Q39 Recognition for doing a good job	0.52	38	29	34
Q11 USPTO management trusts/respects me	0.51	38	27	35
Q10 I trust/respect management of USPTO	0.51	37	27	36
Q89 Satisfied with involvement in decisions affecting work	0.53	35	31	34

**Blue = Favorable**

**Black=Neutral**

**Red=Unfavorable**

# Key Drivers of Q101 - Factor Analysis

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- **Factor analysis of the items strongly correlated with employees' satisfaction with their jobs revealed two major factors associated with this item:**
  - “Trust and Respect” based on the following items:
    - Q11 USPTO management trusts/respects me
    - Q10 I trust/respect management of USPTO
  - “Satisfaction with Work” based on the following items:
    - Q85 Work provides feeling of personal accomplishment
    - Q86 Enjoy the work I do
    - Q87 Satisfied with work variety
    - Q88 Proud of work I do

## Key Drivers of Overall Satisfaction - Factor Analysis (cont.)

- Based on the these two factors, indices were created (the averages of the corresponding items). The indices show high reliability (Cronbach alpha is 0.90 for the “Trust and Respect” index, 0.88 for the “Satisfaction with Work” index).
- The correlations between Q101 and the indices were as follows:

	<u>r</u>
Trust and Respect	0.54
Satisfaction with Work	0.63

# Key Drivers of Factors - Correlation Analysis

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## ■ The following items were strongly correlated with “Trust and Respect”

	<u>r</u>
– Q44 Management treats you with respect	0.65
– Q28 Leader(s) provide environment that supports employee involvement	0.60
– Q29 Leaders follow up on employee suggestions for improvements	0.60
– Q30 Leaders demonstrate quality is important	0.59
– Q16 Proud to work for USPTO	0.59
– Q23 Business Unit strives for excellence	0.58
– Q6 USPTO strives for excellence	0.58
– Q73 My opinions count	0.58
– Q14 Communication across USPTO	0.57
– Q24 Business Unit has cooperative environment	0.56
– Q9 USPTO conducts business cost-effectively/efficiently	0.54
– Q76 Creativity/innovation rewarded	0.54
– Q3 Rate USPTO as place to work, compared with other employers	0.54
– Q25 Business Unit conducts business cost-effectively/efficiently	0.54
– Q7 Different parts of USPTO cooperate for high quality performance	0.54
– Q37 Rewarded for providing high quality products/services	0.53
– Q89 Satisfied with involvement in decisions affecting work	0.53
– Q39 Recognition for doing a good job	0.53
– Q22 Business Unit innovation	0.52

## ■ The following items were strongly correlated with “Satisfaction w/ Work”

– Q16 Proud to work for USPTO	0.59
– Q71 Job effectively utilizes my skills and abilities	0.59

## Key Drivers of Q102 - Correlation Analysis

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- The following items were strongly correlated with overall satisfaction in the USPTO at the present time

	<u>r</u>
– Q3 Rate USPTO as place to work, compared with other employers	0.63
– Q16 Proud to work for USPTO	0.61
– Q11 USPTO management trusts/respects me	0.57
– Q10 I trust/respect management of USPTO	0.56
– Q6 USPTO strives for excellence	0.53
– Q89 Satisfied with involvement in decisions affecting work	0.52
– Q39 Recognition for doing a good job	0.50
– Q85 Work provides feeling of personal accomplishment	0.50
– Q37 Rewarded for providing high quality products/services	0.50
– Q23 Business Unit strives for excellence	0.50

## **Key Drivers of Satisfaction with USPTO (Q3)**

- Q3 demonstrated the highest correlation with employees' overall satisfaction in the USPTO at the present time

- In turn, the following items were strongly correlated with Q3:

	<b><u>r</u></b>
– Q16 Proud to work for USPTO	<b>0.61</b>
– Q10 I trust/respect management of USPTO	<b>0.52</b>
– Q11 USPTO management trusts/respects me	<b>0.51</b>

# Overall Satisfaction ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, lukewarm results

- Lukewarm on satisfaction with job and overall satisfaction in USPTO

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors consistently approximately 20% more favorable than Non-supervisors

## ■ Compared to Other Companies/Agencies

- While Supervisors are same as norm and Non-supervisors are slightly below the norm on overall satisfaction in USPTO, both are below the norm on satisfaction with job

## ■ Key Driver Analysis Conclusions

- “Trust and Respect” (based on Q11 and Q10) and “Satisfaction with Work” (based on items Q85-88) indices are the key drivers of employees’ satisfaction with their jobs.
- Among the single items that drive overall satisfaction in the USPTO, Q3 (rate the USPTO as a place to work, compared with other employees) has the highest correlation with overall satisfaction. The key drivers of Q3 include:
  - Q16 Proud to work for USPTO
  - Q10 I trust/respect management of USPTO
  - Q11 USPTO management trusts/respects me

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# Tenure

Q.106 How long have you worked for USPTO?

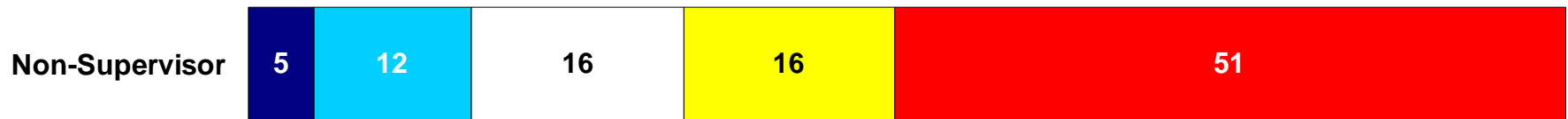
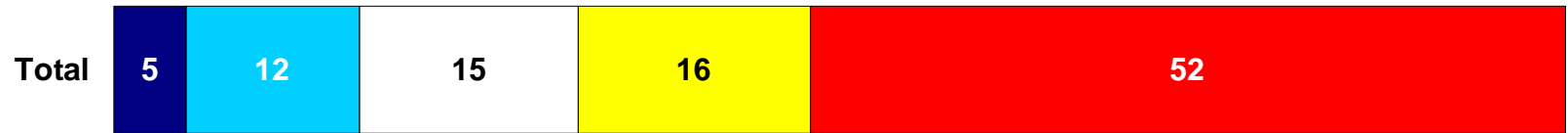
■ % Less than 1 year   ■ % 1-5 years   ■ % 6-10 years   ■ % 11-20 years   ■ % 20 or more



# Tenure

Q.107 How long do you plan to continue working for USPTO?

■ % Less than 1 year ■ % 1-2 years □ % 3-5 years ■ % More than 5 years ■ % Until Retirement



■ Attrition potential very low for Supervisors (6%) and moderate for Non-supervisors (9%).  
Overall attrition potential is moderate (9%)

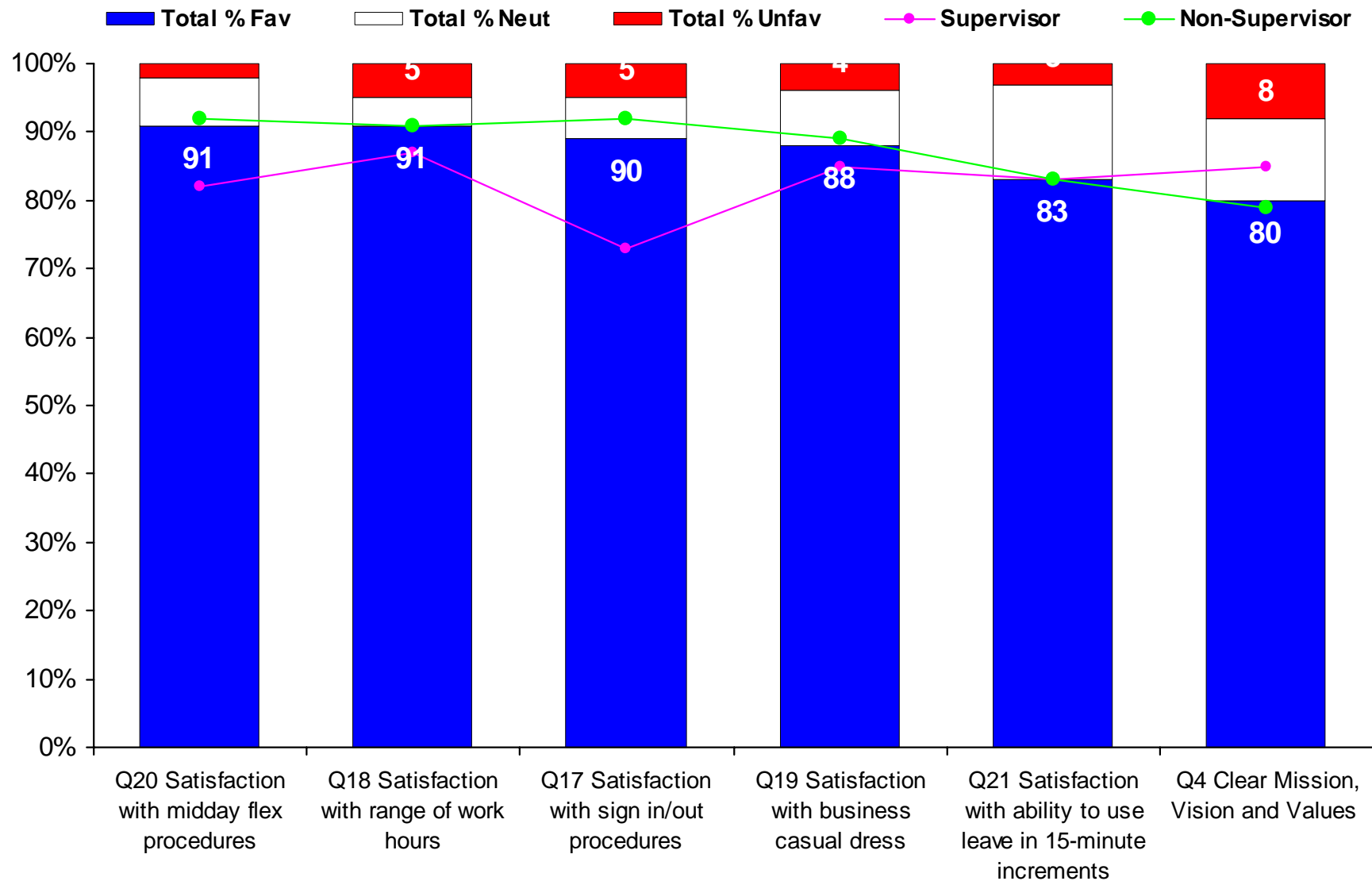
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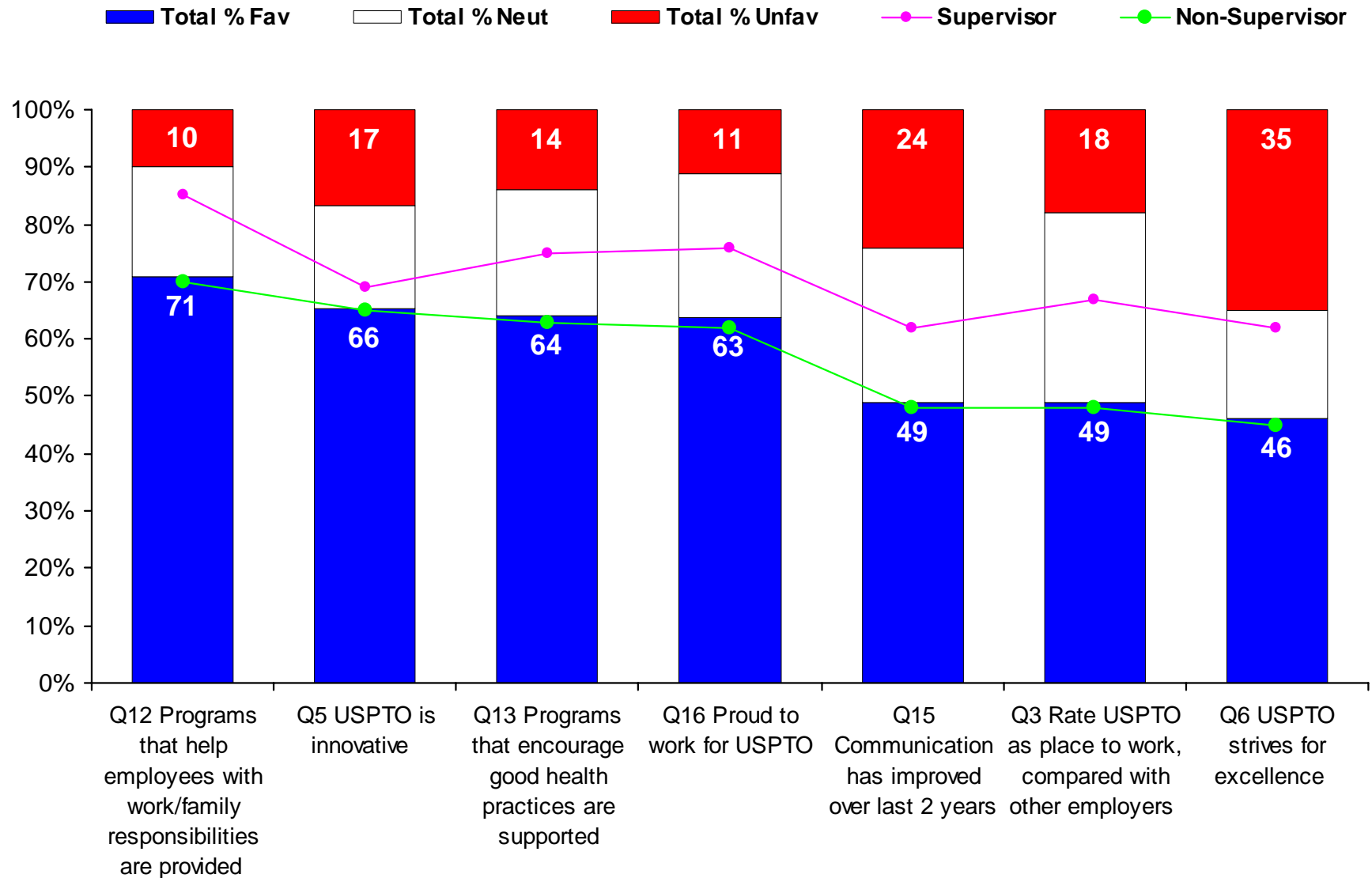
# About USPTO

## Ranked by Total % Favorable



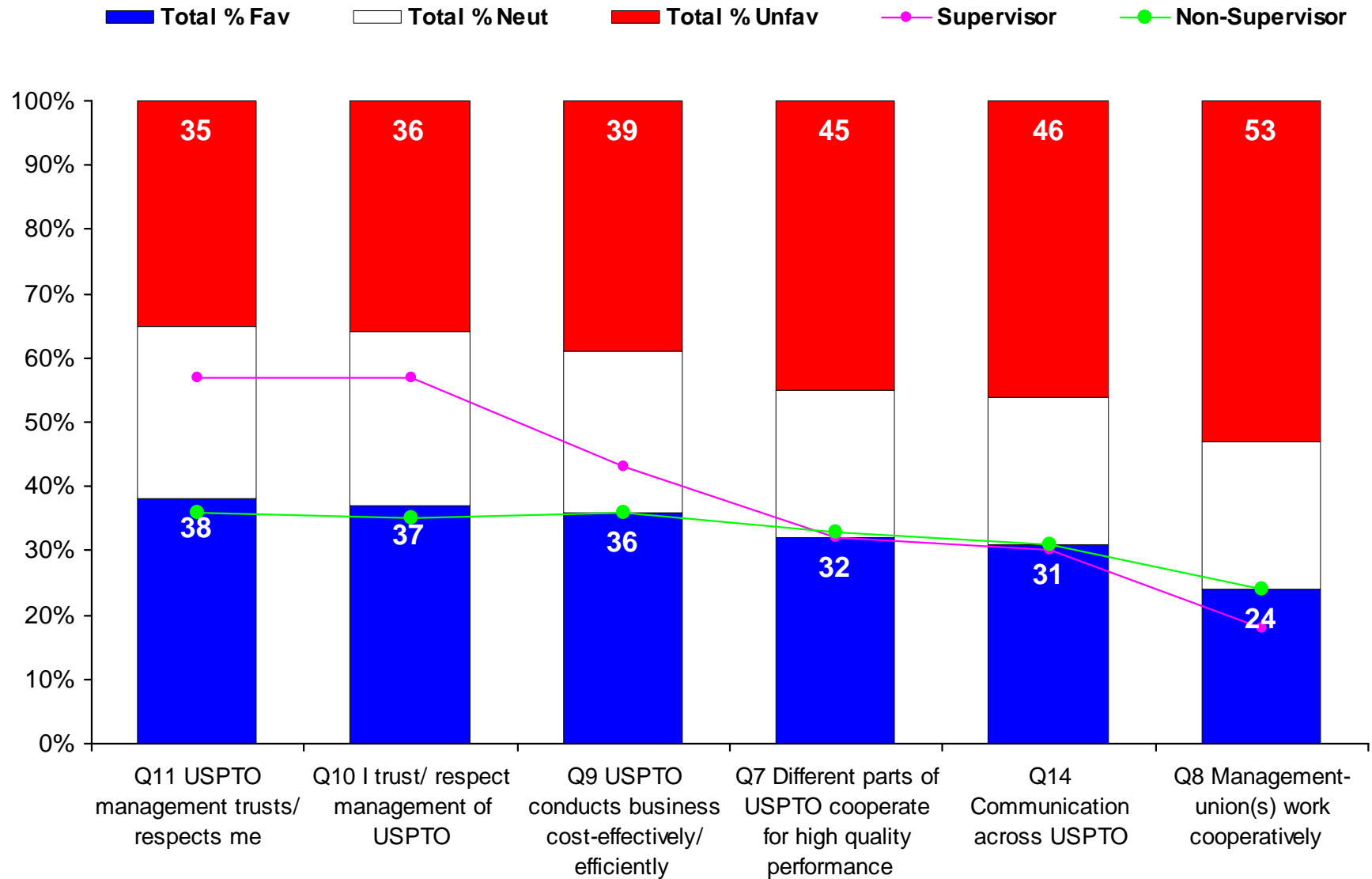
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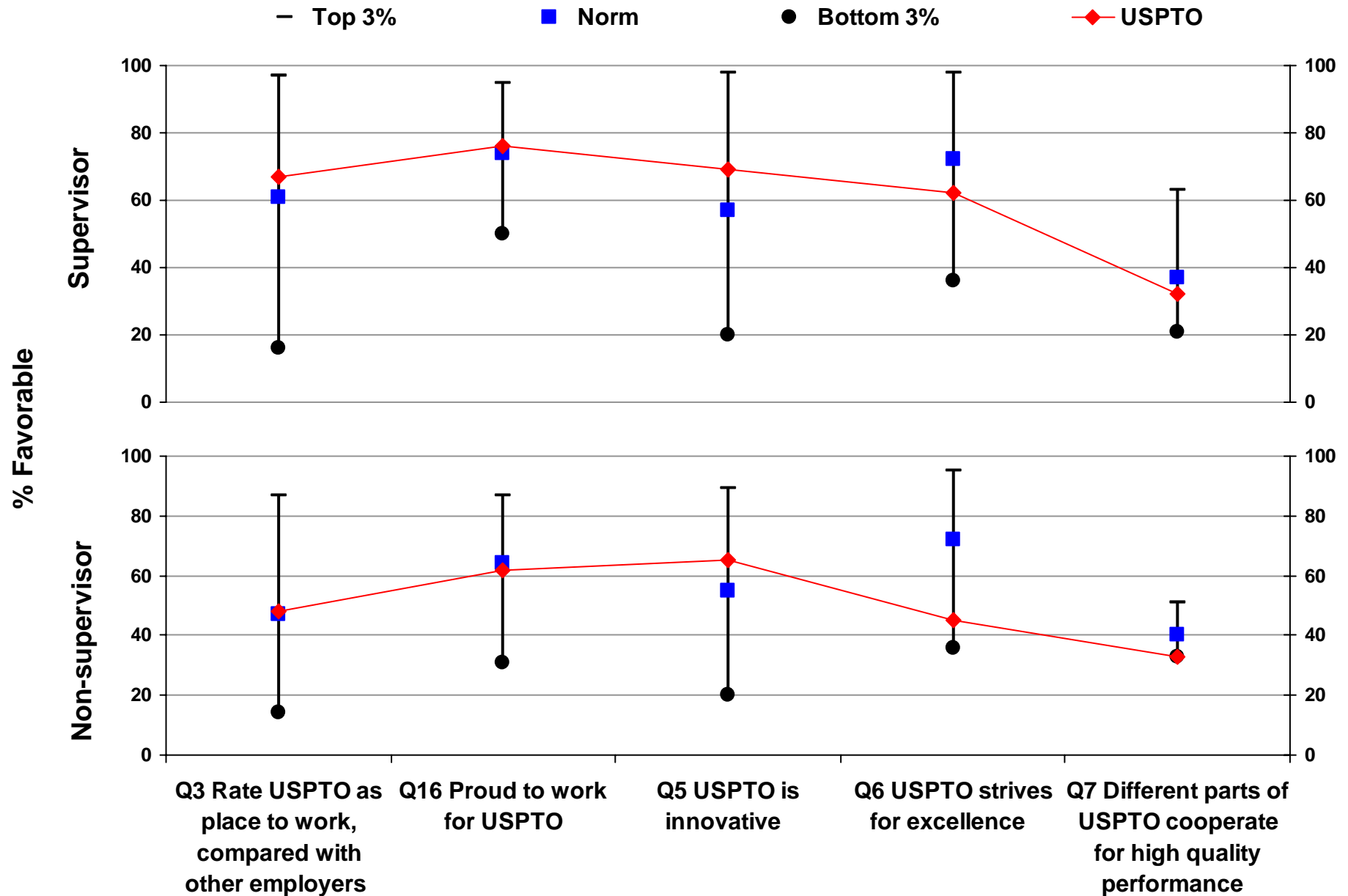


# About USPTO

## Ranked by Total % Favorable



# About USPTO - Normative Comparison



# About USPTO ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, Wide Range of Results

- Quite favorable on USPTO initiatives (midday flex, work hours, sign-in/out, dress and leave)
- Generally/Moderately Favorable on USPTO programs, innovation and pride
- Many employees (49%) feel that communication has improved in last 2 years and many rate USPTO as good place to work compared to other employers
- Unfavorable in areas such as trust, cooperation (-45%), communication (46%), management/union relationship (-53%) and cost effectiveness/efficiency

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors generally rate higher than Non-supervisors (typical in employee surveys), except on the more favorable items, such as satisfaction with business-casual dress, sign in/out procedures, range of work hours and midday flex procedures
- Supervisors far less favorable on satisfaction with sign-in/out procedures
- Supervisors far more favorable than Non-supervisors on USPTO compared to other employers, USPTO strives for excellence and trust

## ■ Compared to Other Companies/Agencies

- Similar to other companies/agencies, but more favorable on innovation and less favorable on USPTO strives for excellence (especially Non-supervisors) and cooperation



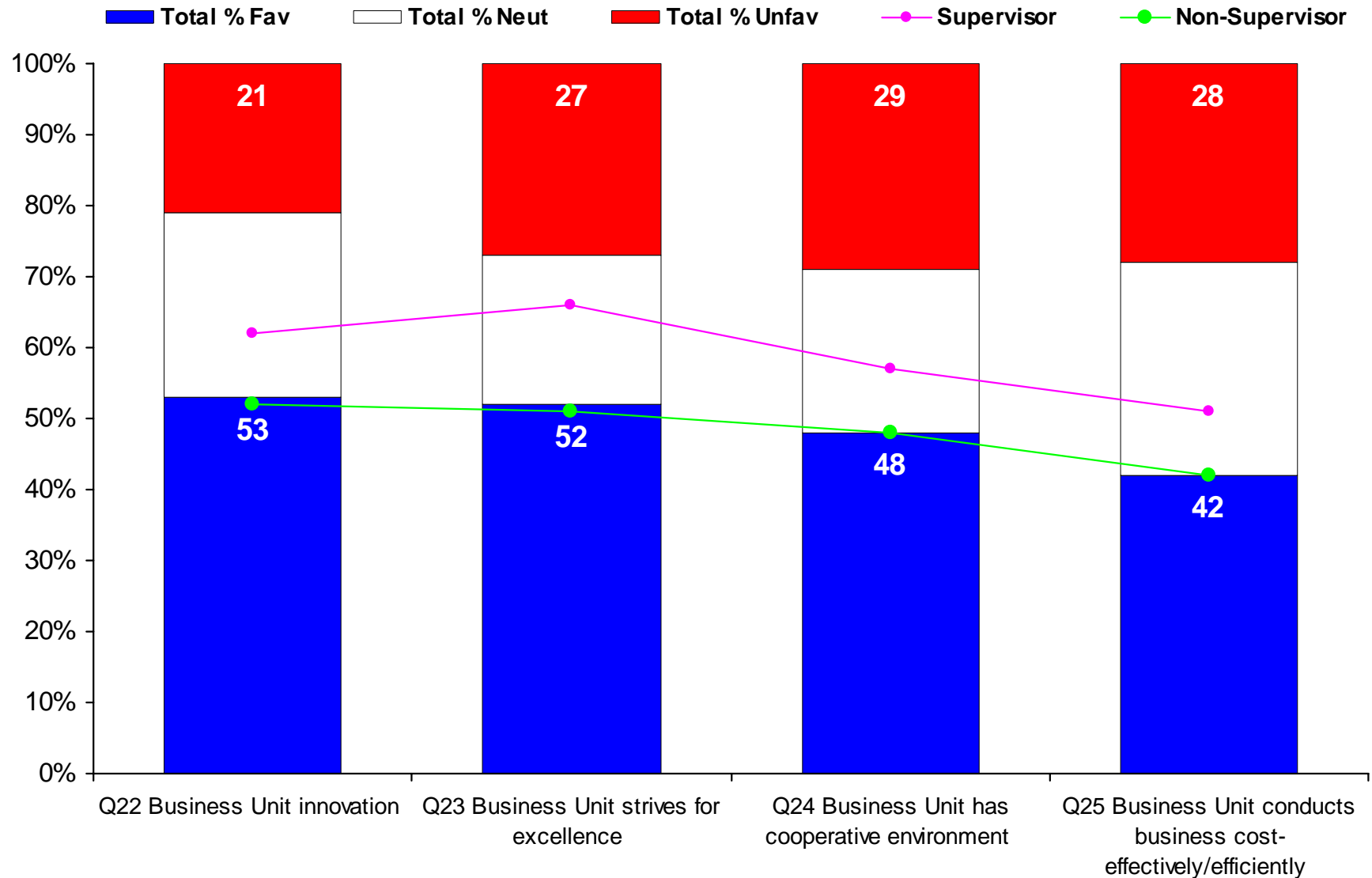
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# About My Business Unit

## Ranked by Total % Favorable



# About My Business Unit ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, Moderately favorable/lukewarm results

- Moderately favorable on innovation and business unit strives for excellence
- Lukewarm on cooperative environment and cost effectiveness/efficiency

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors more positive, especially on business unit striving for excellence

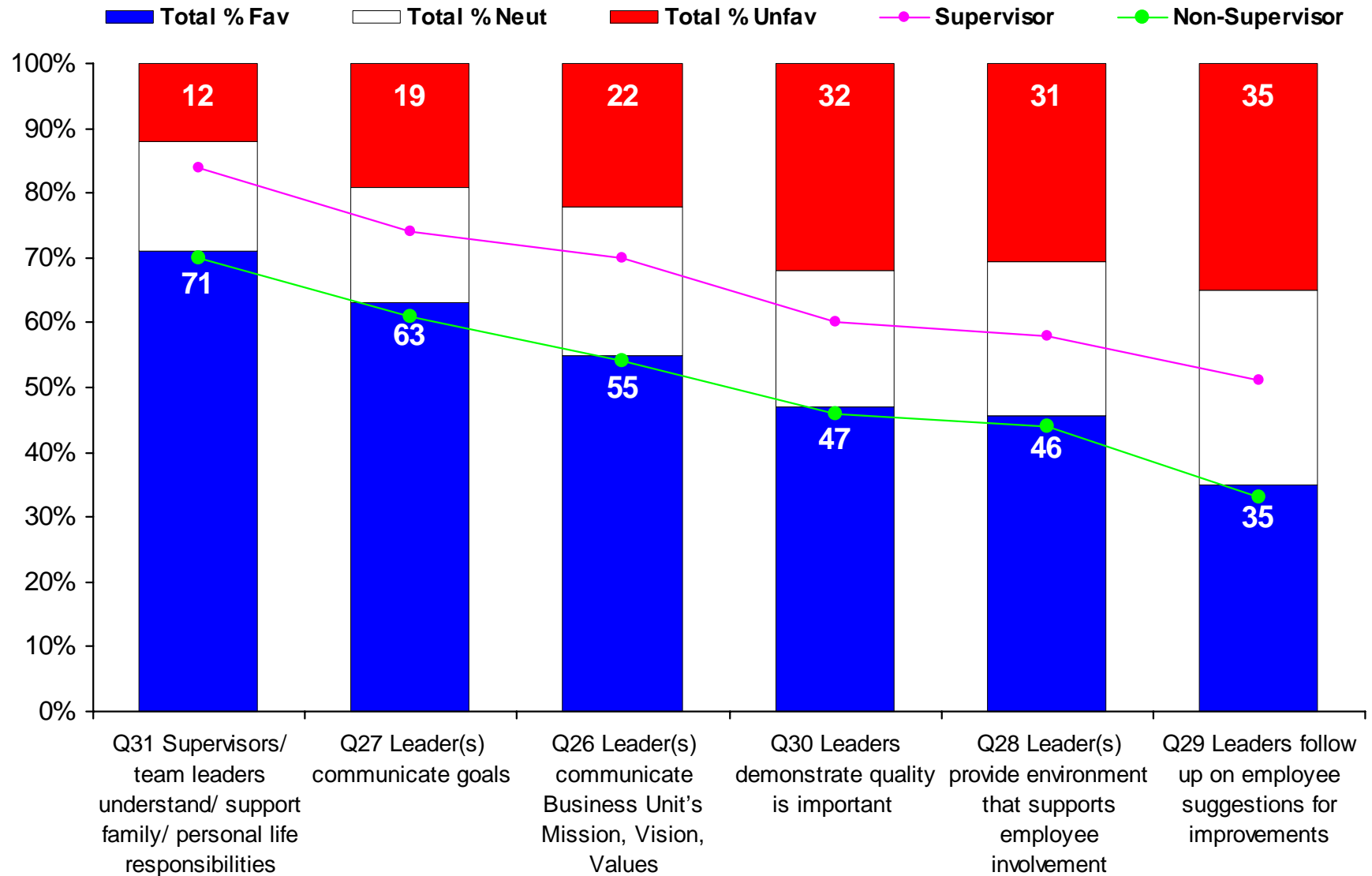
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# In My Business Unit

## Ranked by Total % Favorable



# In My Business Unit ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, wide range of results

- Favorable/Moderately favorable on personal life understanding/support and leaders communicate goals, mission, vision and values
- Unfavorable on leaders demonstrating quality is important, supporting employee involvement and following up on employee suggestions for improvement

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors consistently 10%-15% more positive than Non-supervisors

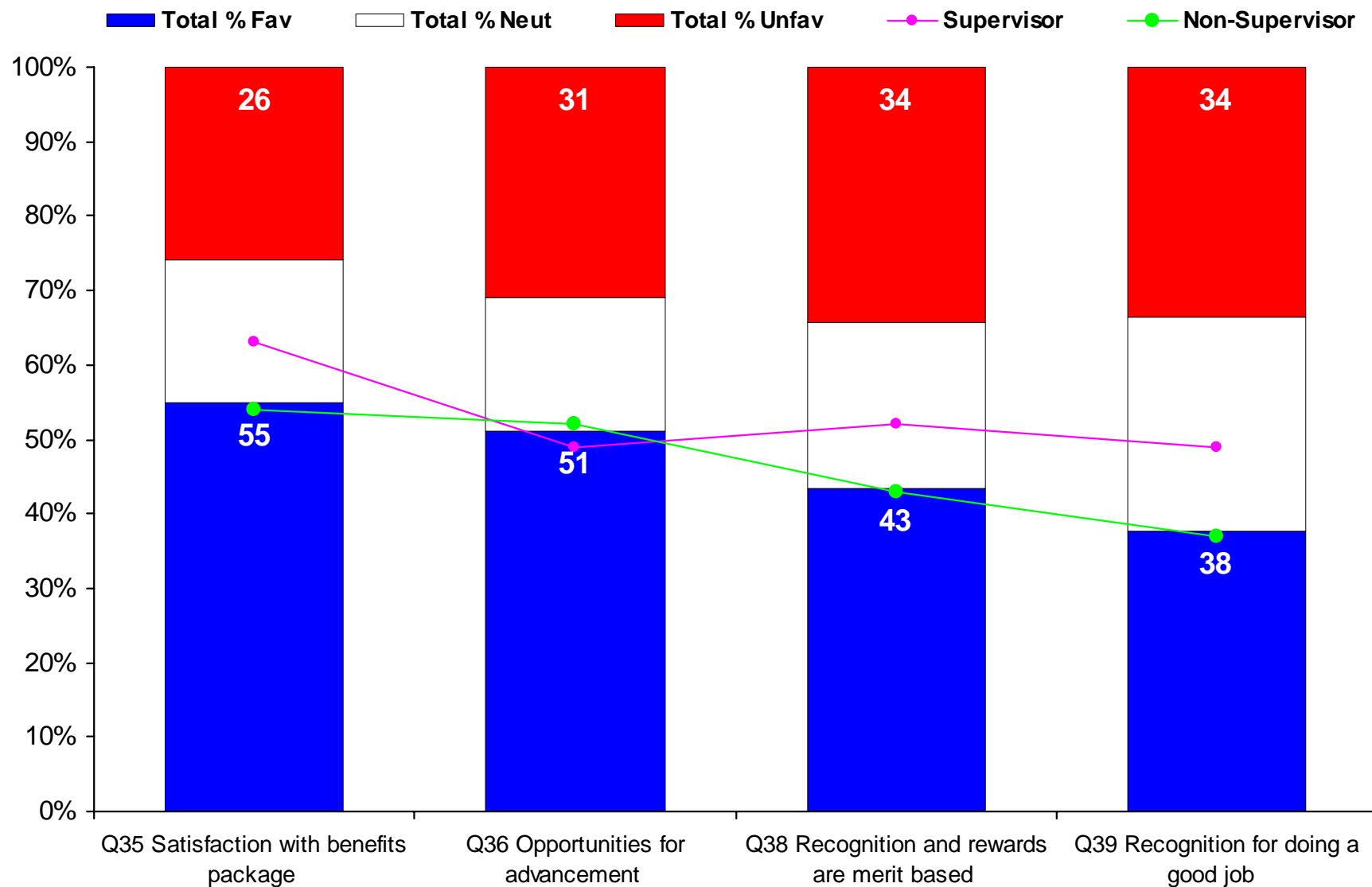
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# Compensation, Rewards and Recognition in My Business Unit

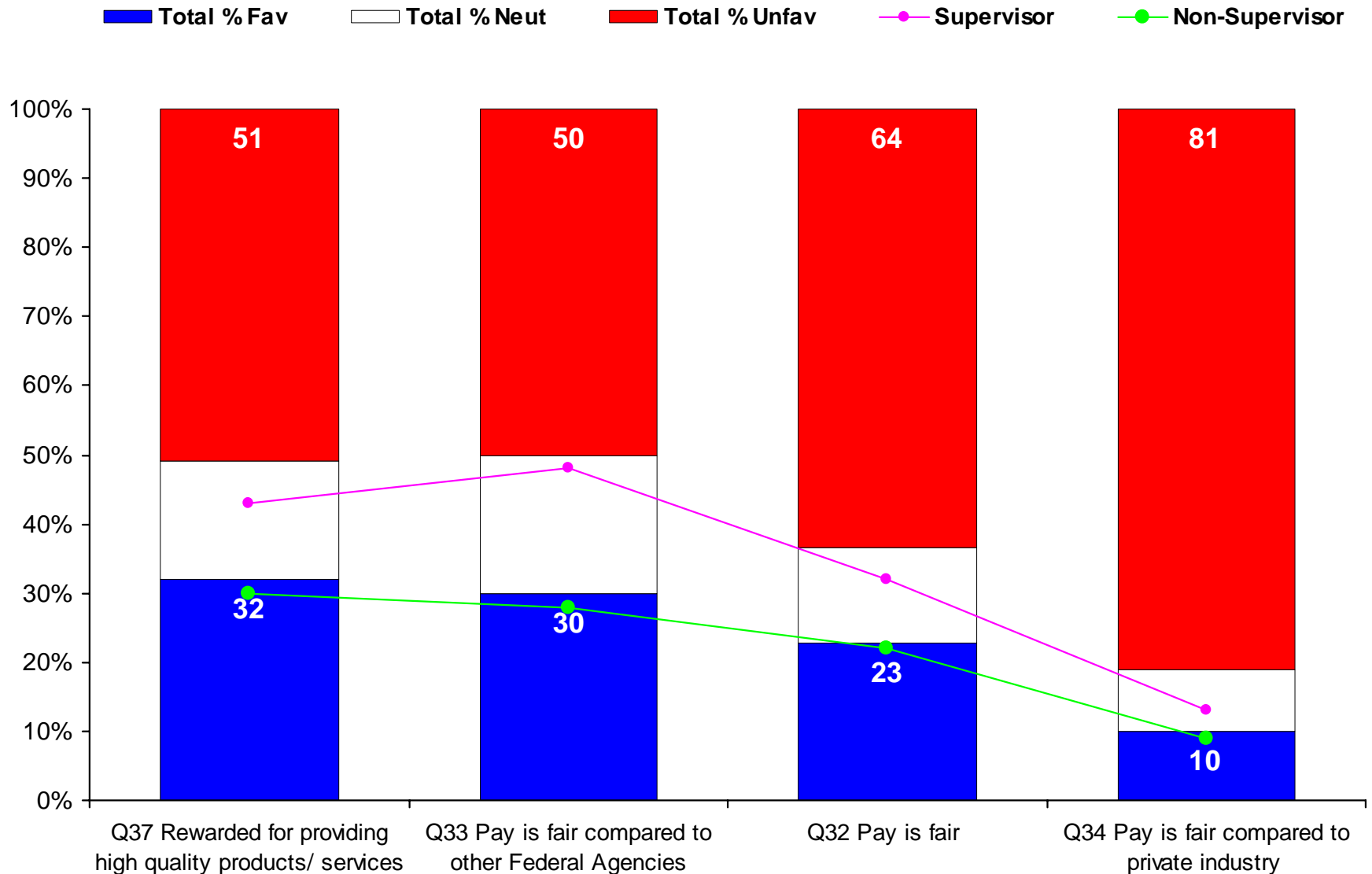
Ranked by Total % Favorable



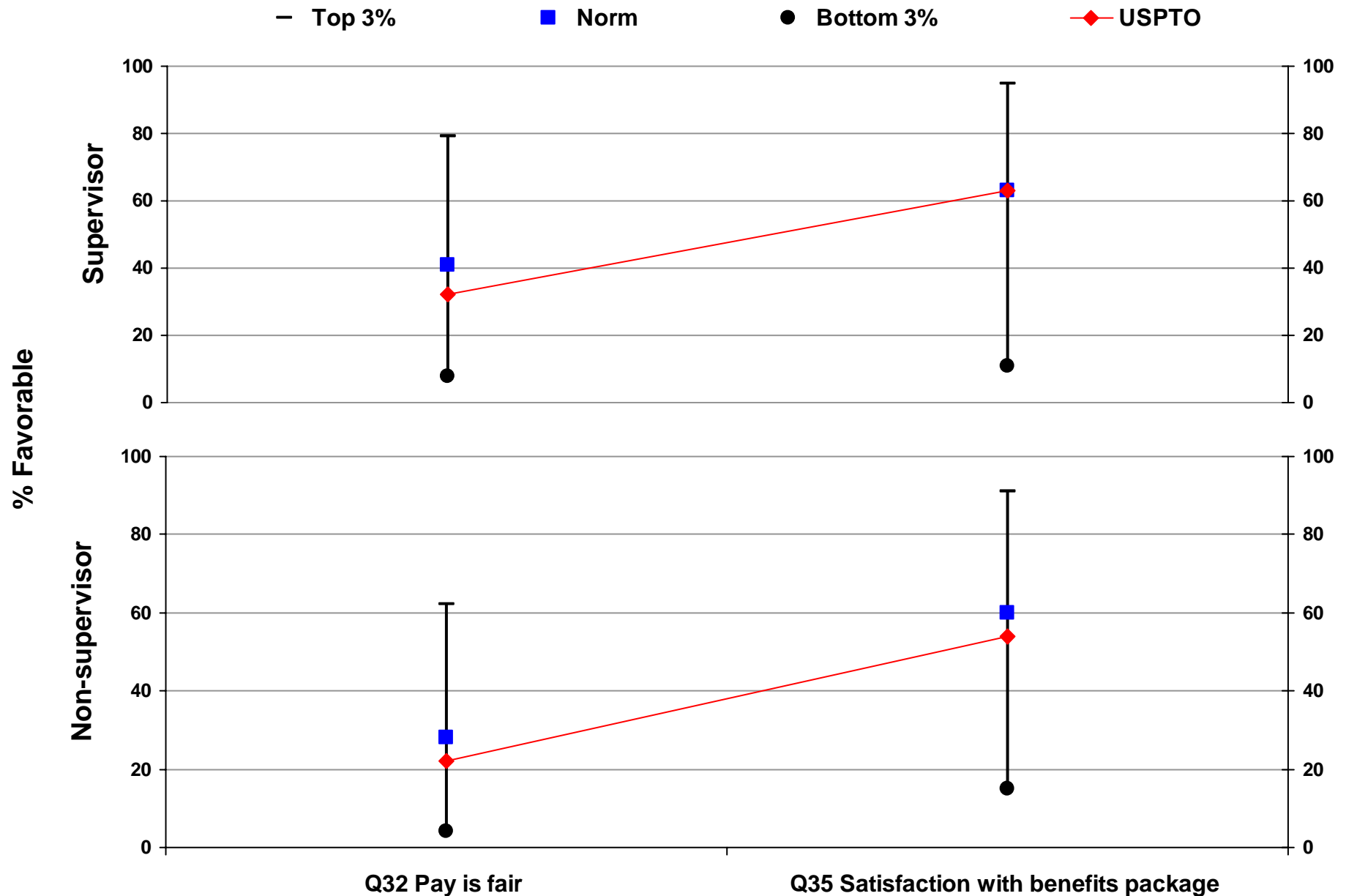


# Compensation, Rewards and Recognition in My Business Unit

Ranked by Total % Favorable



# Compensation, Rewards and Recognition in My Business Unit - Normative Comparison



# Compensation, Rewards and Recognition in My Business

## Unit ... In Sum

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### ■ Overall, unfavorable results

- Moderately favorable on satisfaction with benefits package
- Unfavorable on opportunities for advancement, recognition & rewards based on merit and recognition for doing a good job
- Very unfavorable on rewarded for providing high quality products/services (-51%), fair pay compared to federal agencies/private industry (-50%), Fair pay (-64%) and Fair pay compared to private industry (-81%)

### ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors more favorable overall (except for opportunities for advancement). Especially more favorable than Non-supervisors on pay compared to other federal agencies.

### ■ Compared to Other Companies/Agencies

- Below norms on fair pay and satisfaction with benefits package (except for supervisors, at norm)

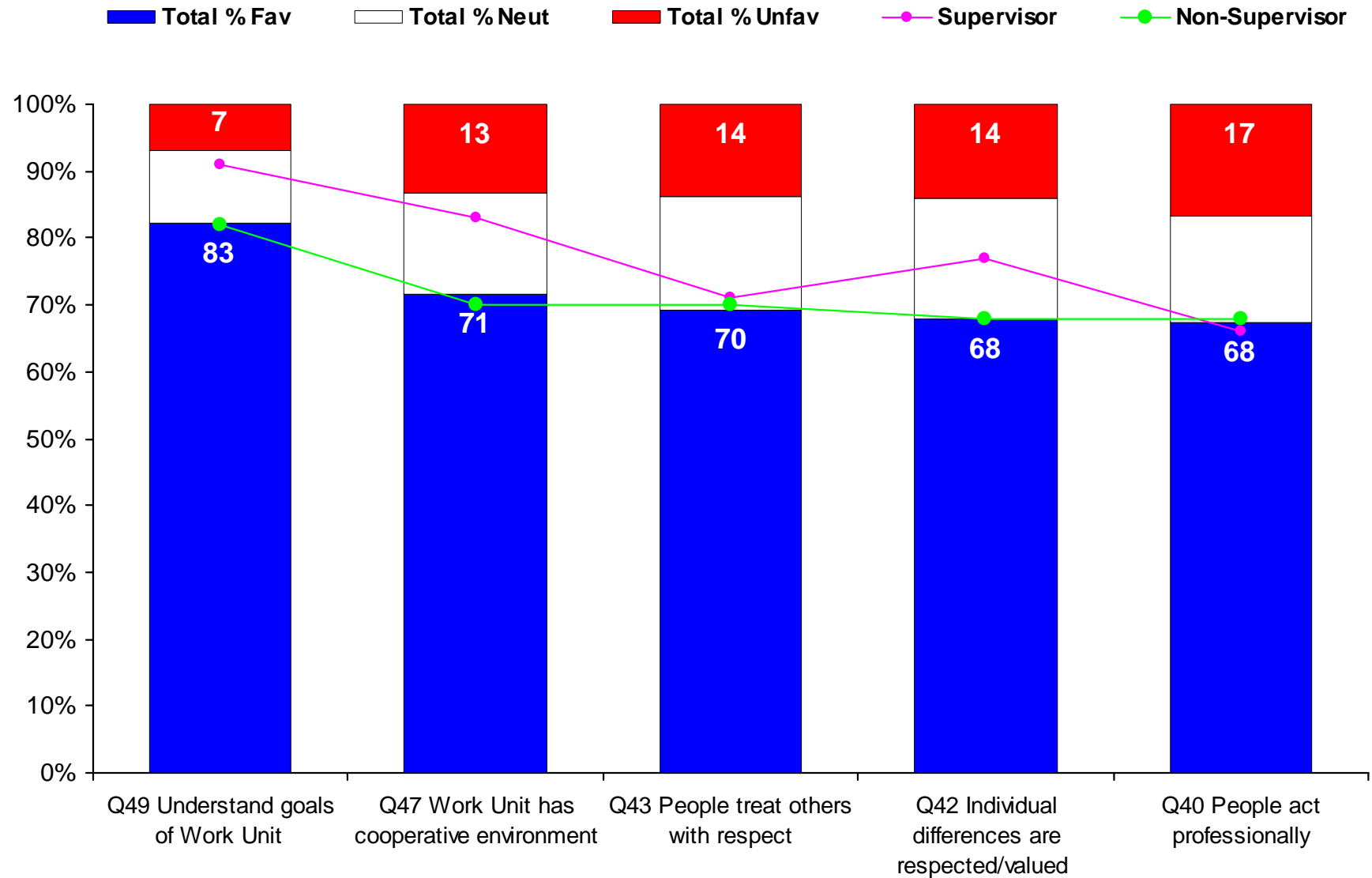
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# Treatment of Others in My Business Unit

Ranked by Total % Favorable



# Treatment of Others in My Business Unit ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, favorable results

- Very favorable on understand goals of Work Unit
- Favorable on cooperative environment, respect, differences are respected/valued and act professionally

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors generally more favorable, especially on having a cooperative environment
- Non-supervisors slightly more favorable on people acting professionally

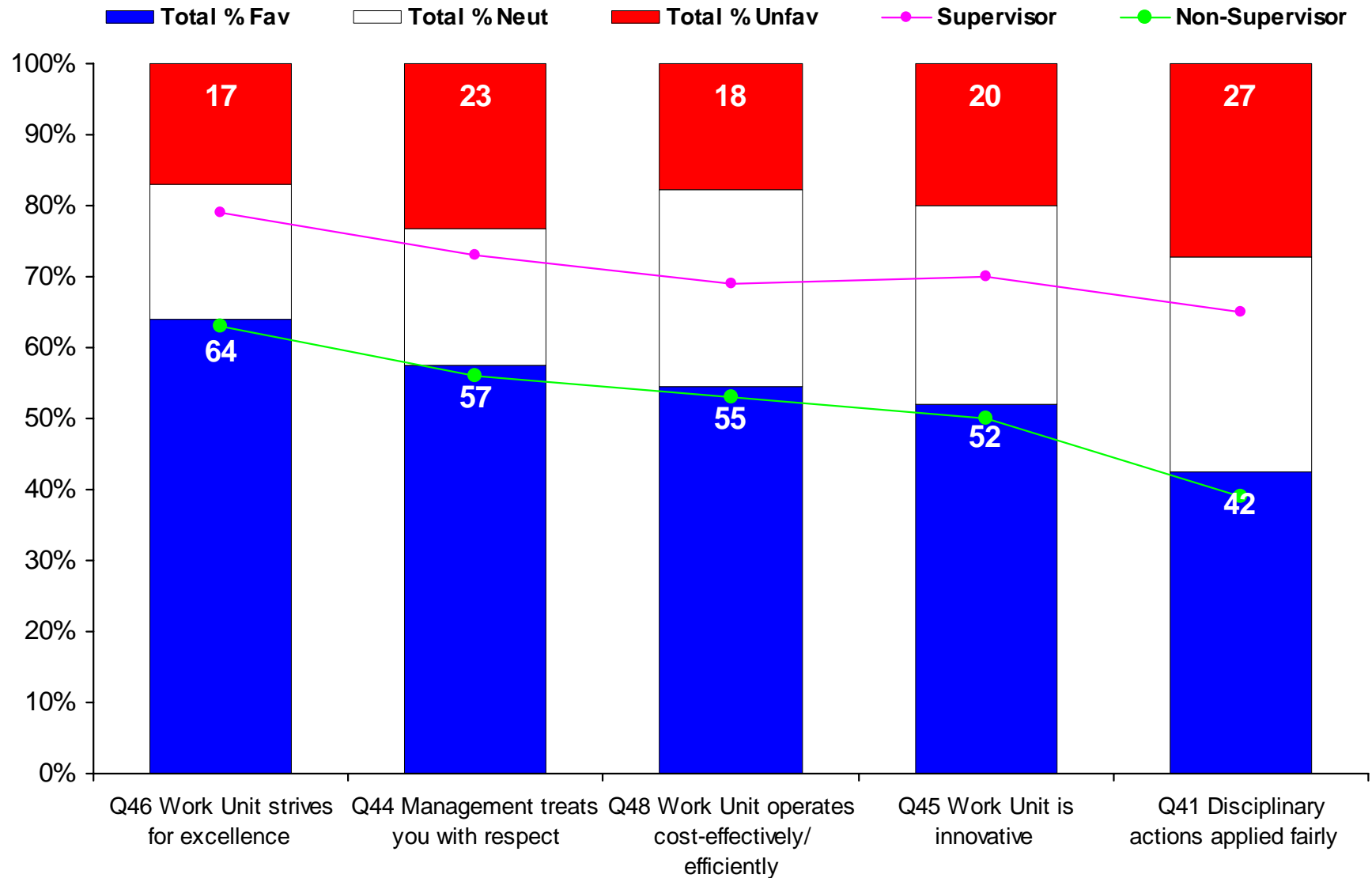
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# About My Work Unit

## Ranked by Total % Favorable





# About My Work Unit... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, mixed results

- Moderately favorable on work unit strives for excellence, treated with respect, operates efficiently/effectively and innovation
- Lukewarm on disciplinary actions applied fairly

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors consistently more favorable than Non-supervisors. Especially more favorable on disciplinary actions applied fairly

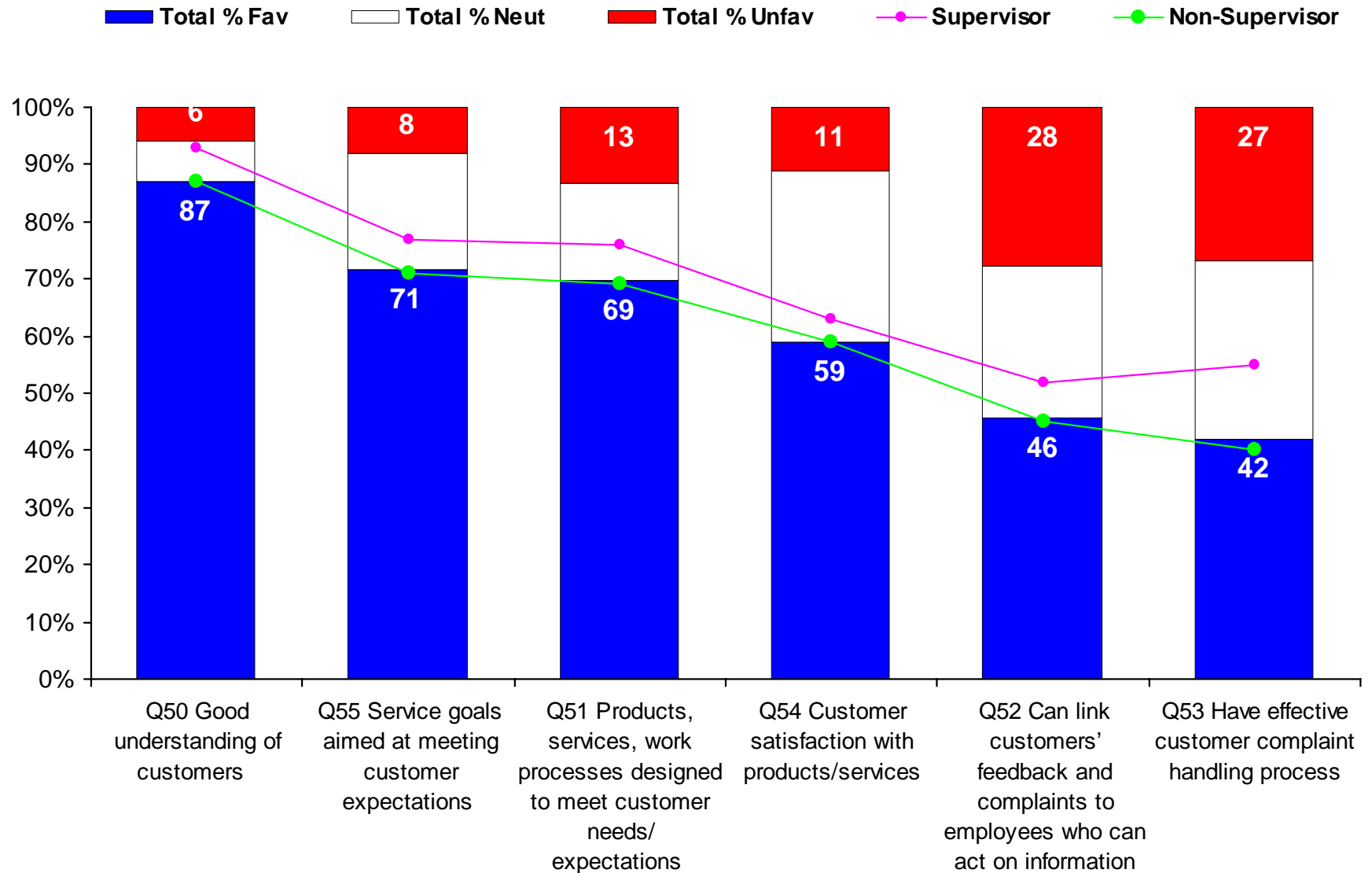
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# In My Work Unit

## Ranked by Total % Favorable



# In My Work Unit ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, mixed results

- Very favorable on having a good understanding of customers.
- Favorable/moderately favorable on service goals meeting customer expectation, processes designed to meet customer needs/expectations and customers satisfaction with products/services
- Lukewarm on linking feedback and customer complaints with correct employees and effective customer complaint process

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Again, Supervisors more positive overall, especially on having an effective customer complaint process

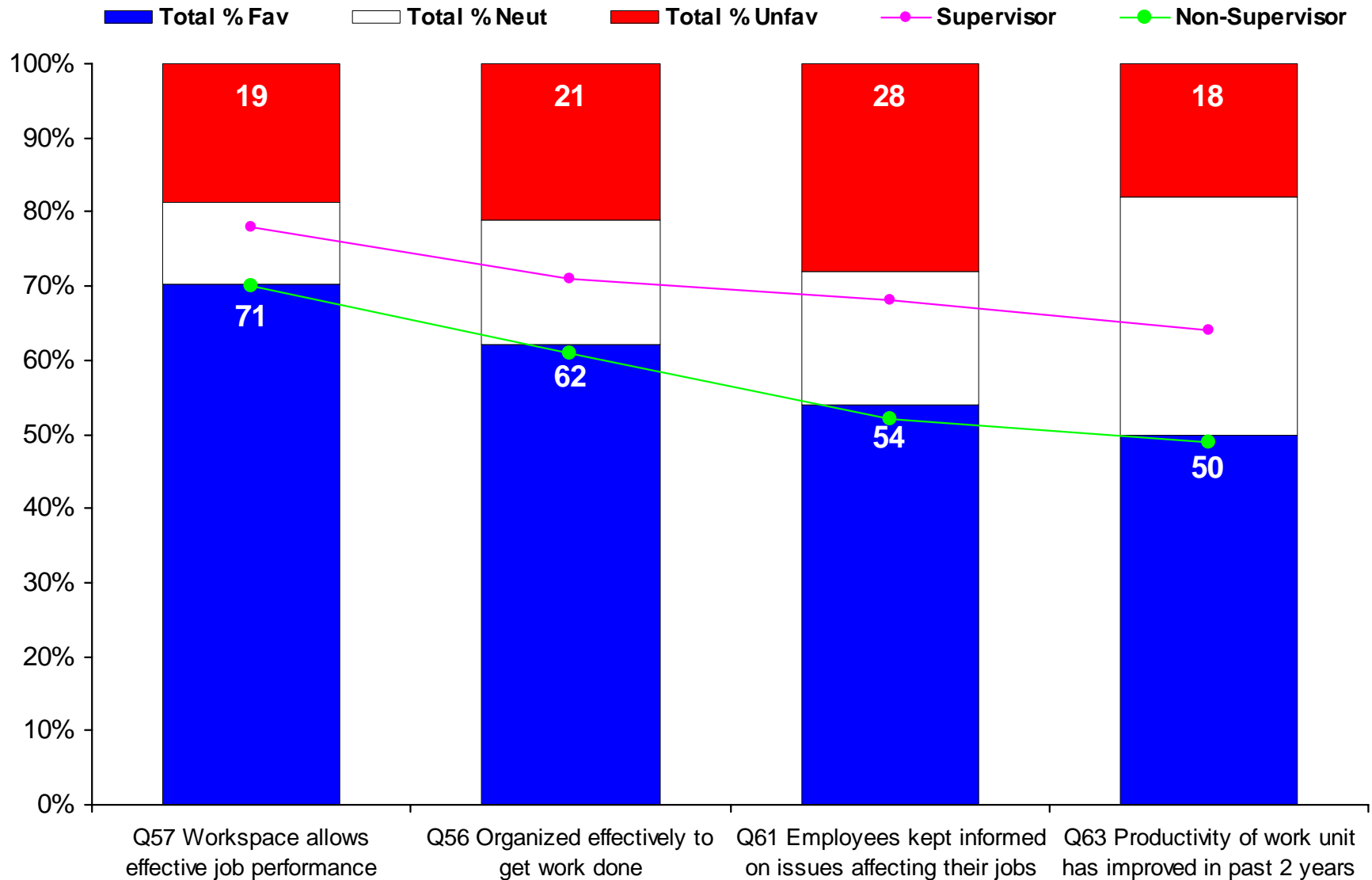
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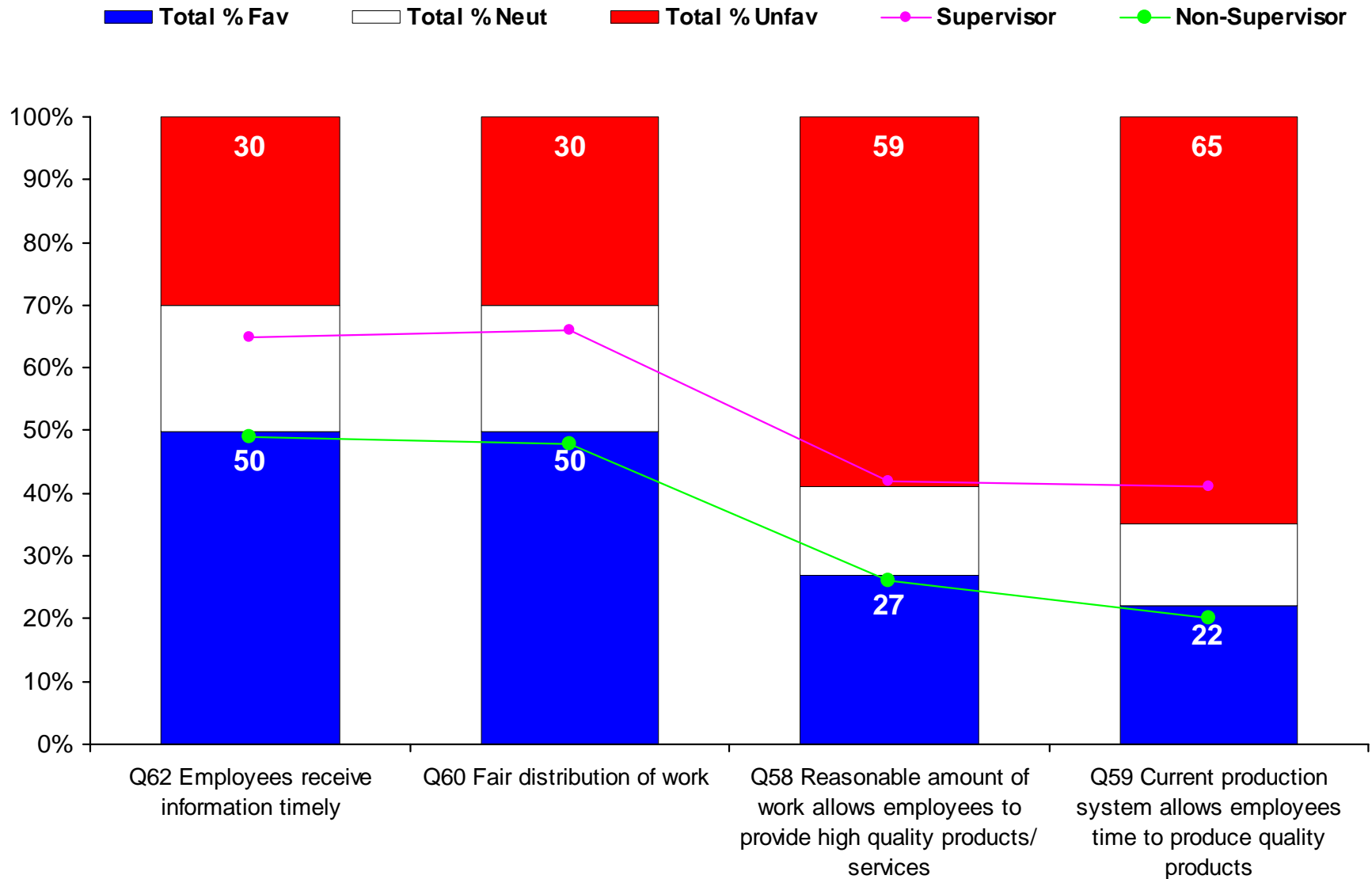
# Efficiency/Effectiveness in My Work Unit

Ranked by Total % Favorable



# Efficiency/Effectiveness in My Work Unit

Ranked by Total % Favorable



# Efficiency/Effectiveness in My Work Unit ... In Sum

## ■ Overall, very mixed results

- Favorable/moderately favorable on workspace allowing effective job performance, organized effectively to get the work done and employees kept informed on issues affecting their jobs
- Lukewarm on productivity improving over the last 2 years
- Unfavorable on employees being kept informed on issues affecting their jobs and employees receiving information timely, fair distribution of work
- Very unfavorable on reasonable amount of work to produce quality products/services(-59%) and current production system allowing employees time to produce quality products(-65%)

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors consistently 8%-15% more favorable than Non-supervisors on all items



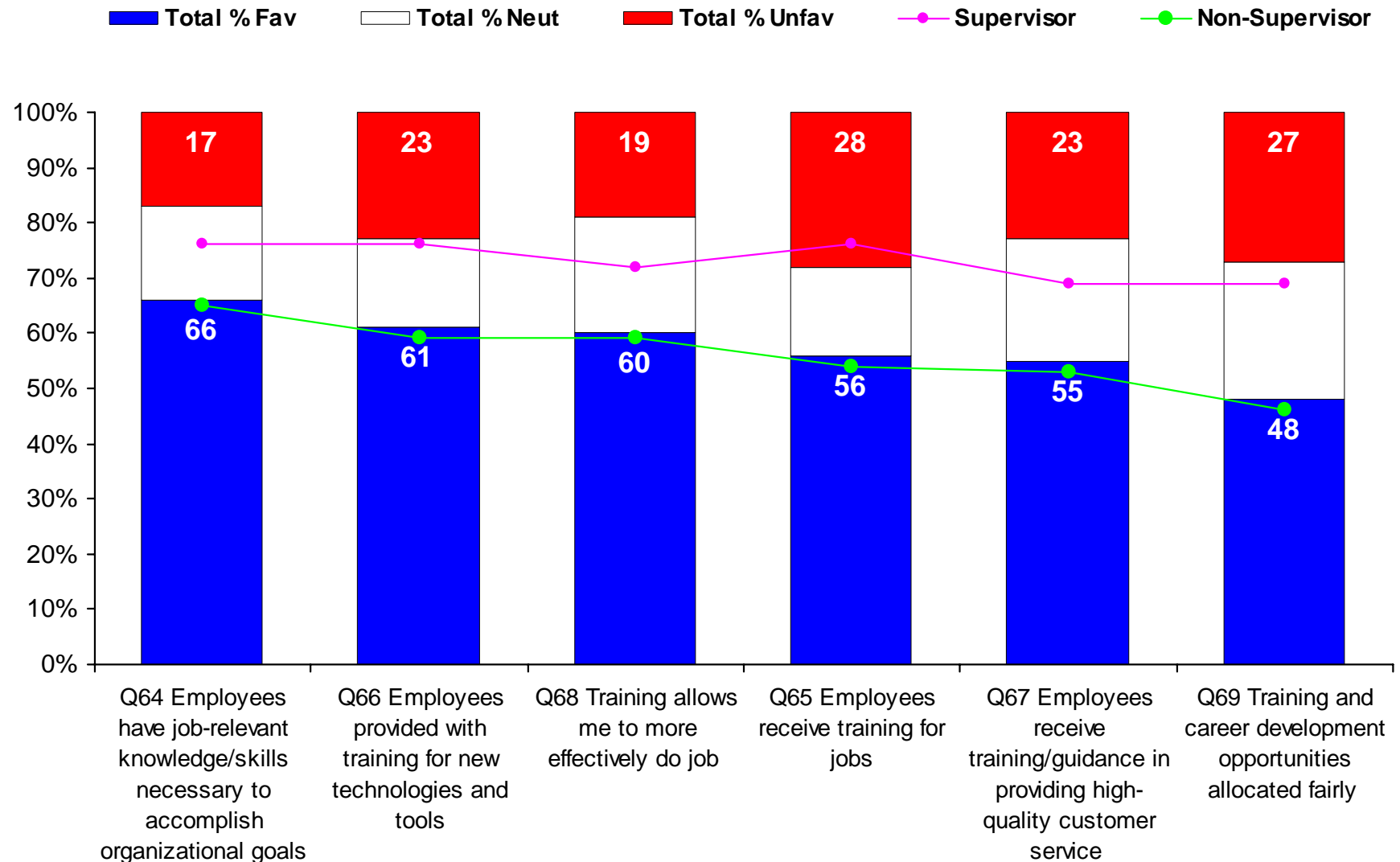
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# Training in My Work Unit

Ranked by Total % Favorable



# Training in My Work Unit ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, results are Moderately favorable/lukewarm

- Moderately favorable on job-relevant knowledge/skills, training for new technologies, training allows one to do more effective job, employees receive training, training for high quality customer service
- Lukewarm on training & career development opportunities allocated fairly

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors more positive than Non-supervisors, especially on training to perform job and training & career development opportunities allocated fairly

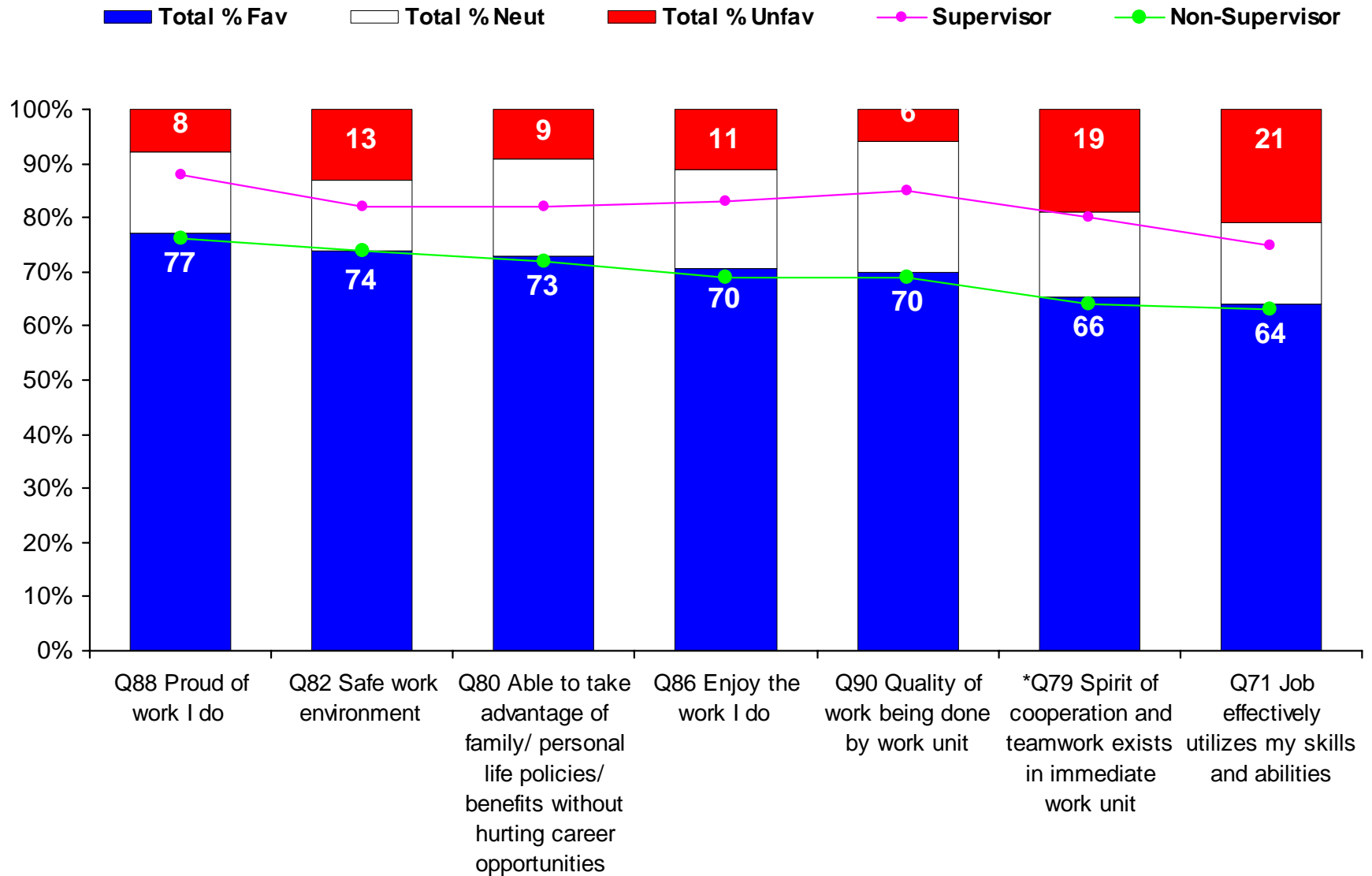
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# Other Issues in My Work Unit

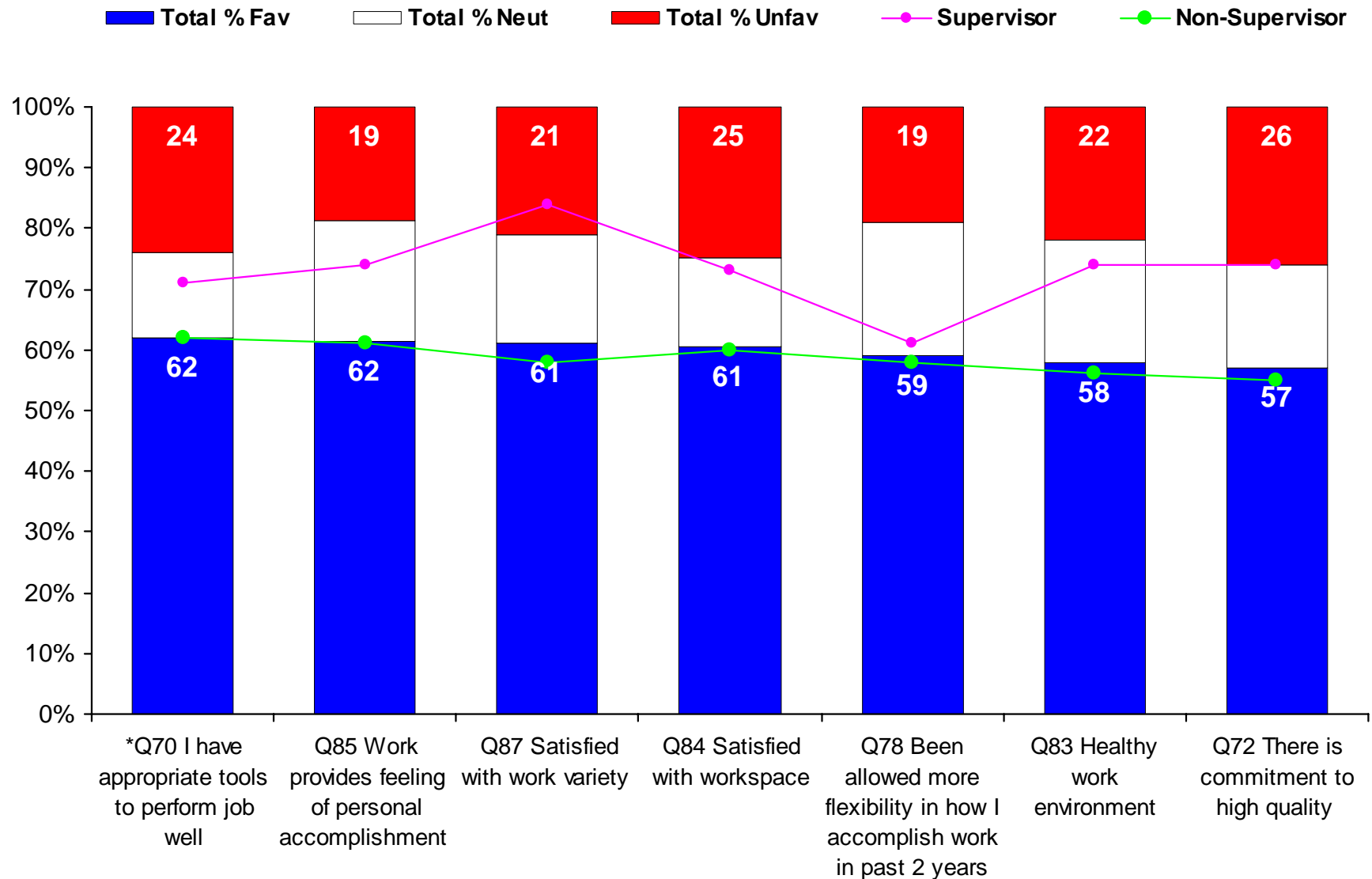
Ranked by Total % Favorable



\* Similar but not exact wording in last survey

# Other Issues in My Work Unit

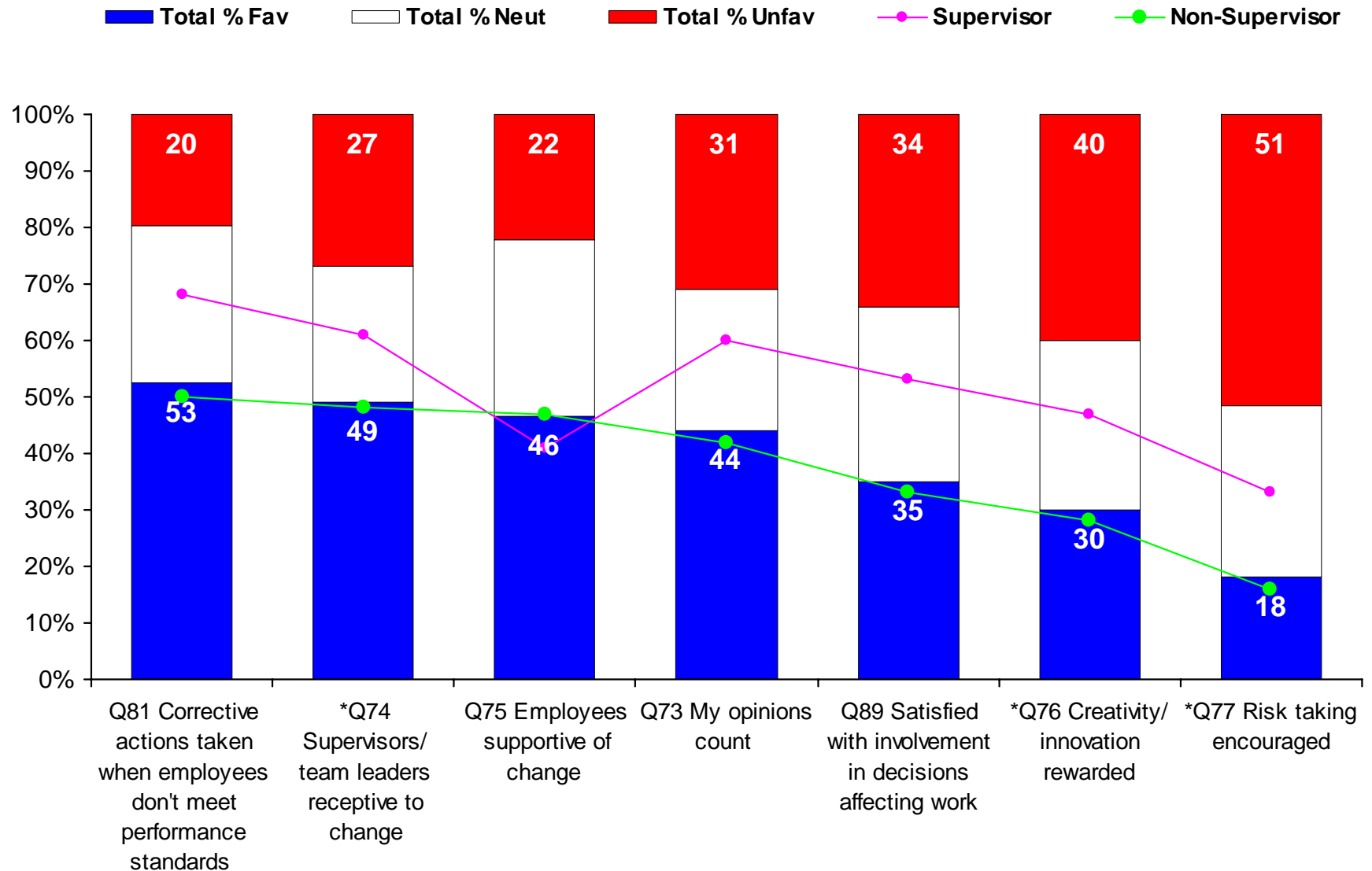
Ranked by Total % Favorable



\* Similar but not exact wording in last survey

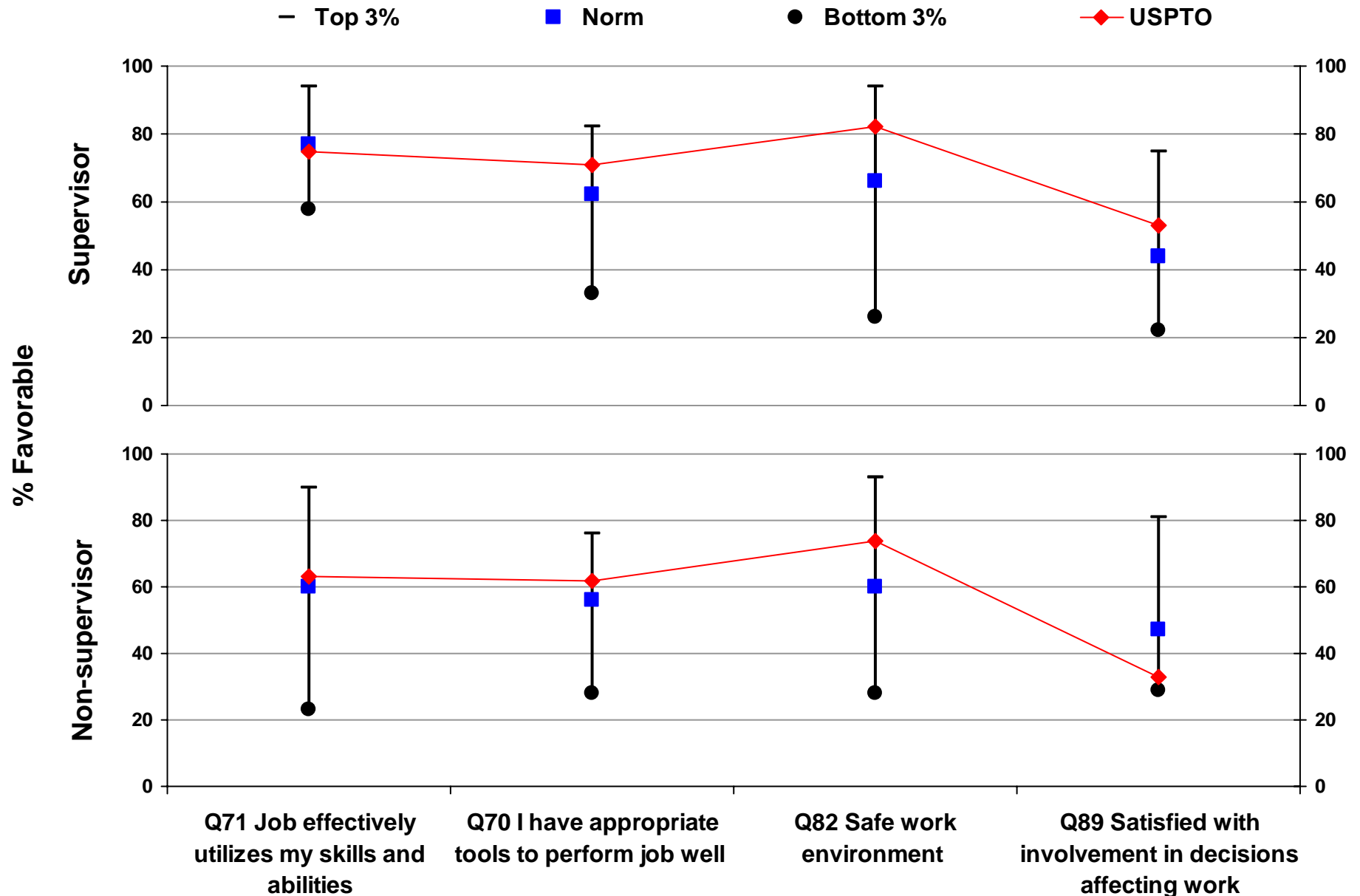
# Other Issues in My Work Unit

Ranked by Total % Favorable



\* Similar but not exact wording in last survey

# Other Issues in My Work Unit - Normative Comparison





# Other Issues in My Work Unit ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, mixed results

- Very favorable on pride in work
- Favorable on safety, personal life issues, enjoyment in work, quality of work and cooperation
- Moderately favorable on job effectively uses skills & abilities, have tools for job, feeling of accomplishment, variety of work, flexibility, healthy work environment and commitment to high quality, corrective actions taken when employees don't meet performance goals
- Lukewarm on supervisors receptive to change, employees supportive of change
- Unfavorable on opinions count and involvement in decisions
- Very unfavorable on creativity/innovation rewarded and risk taking encouraged

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors typically more favorable overall, except for feeling that employees are supportive of change and close to Non-supervisors on allowed more flexibility in the past 2 years
- Supervisors especially more favorable than Non-supervisors on satisfaction with work variety

## ■ Compared to Other Companies/Agencies

- USPTO is consistent with norms on utilizing employee's skills and abilities, above the norms on having tools to perform job and safe work place. Supervisors above norms on being involved in decisions that affect work, but Non-supervisors far below

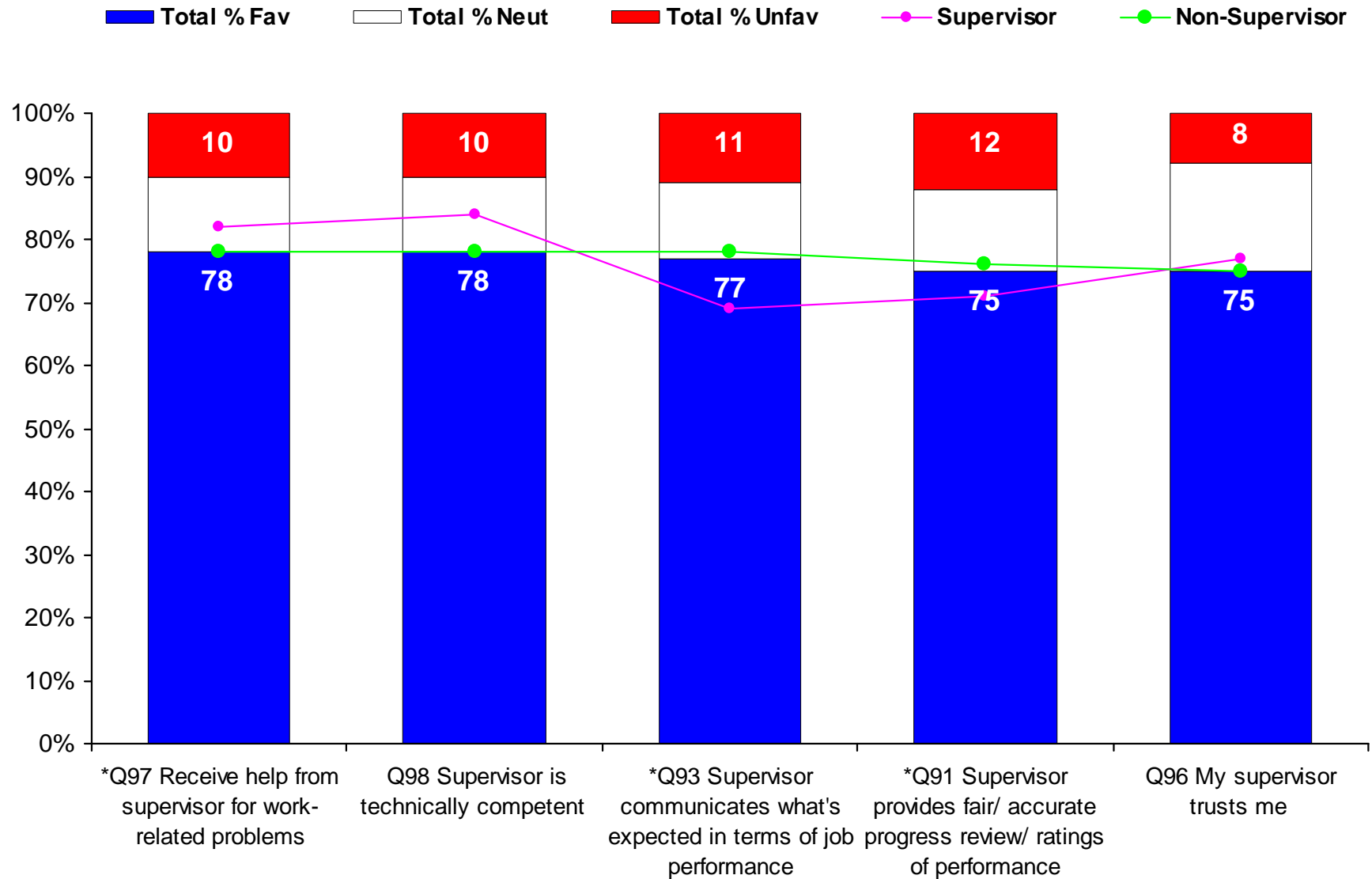
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# About Supervision

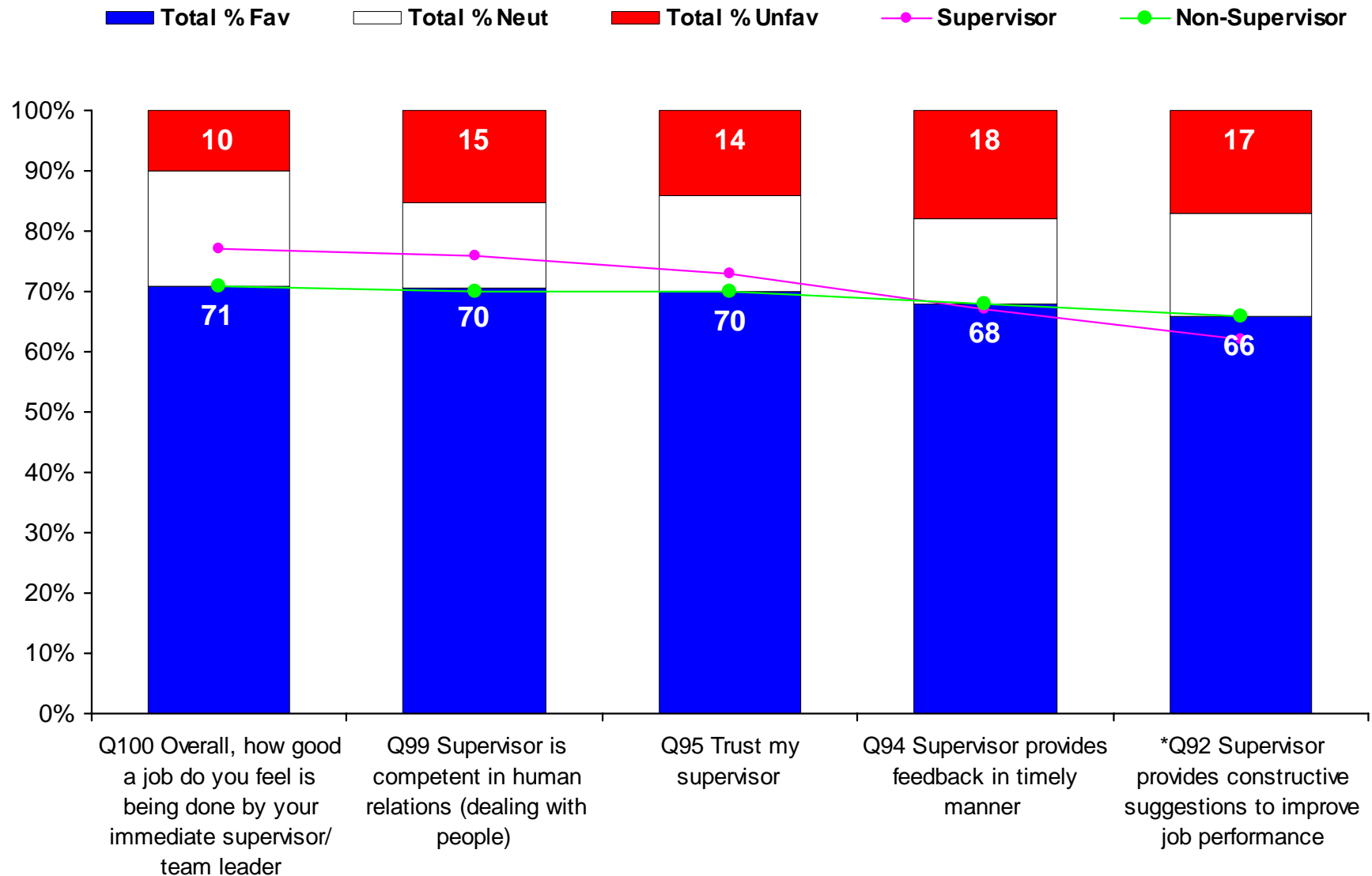
## Ranked by Total % Favorable



\* Similar but not exact wording in last survey

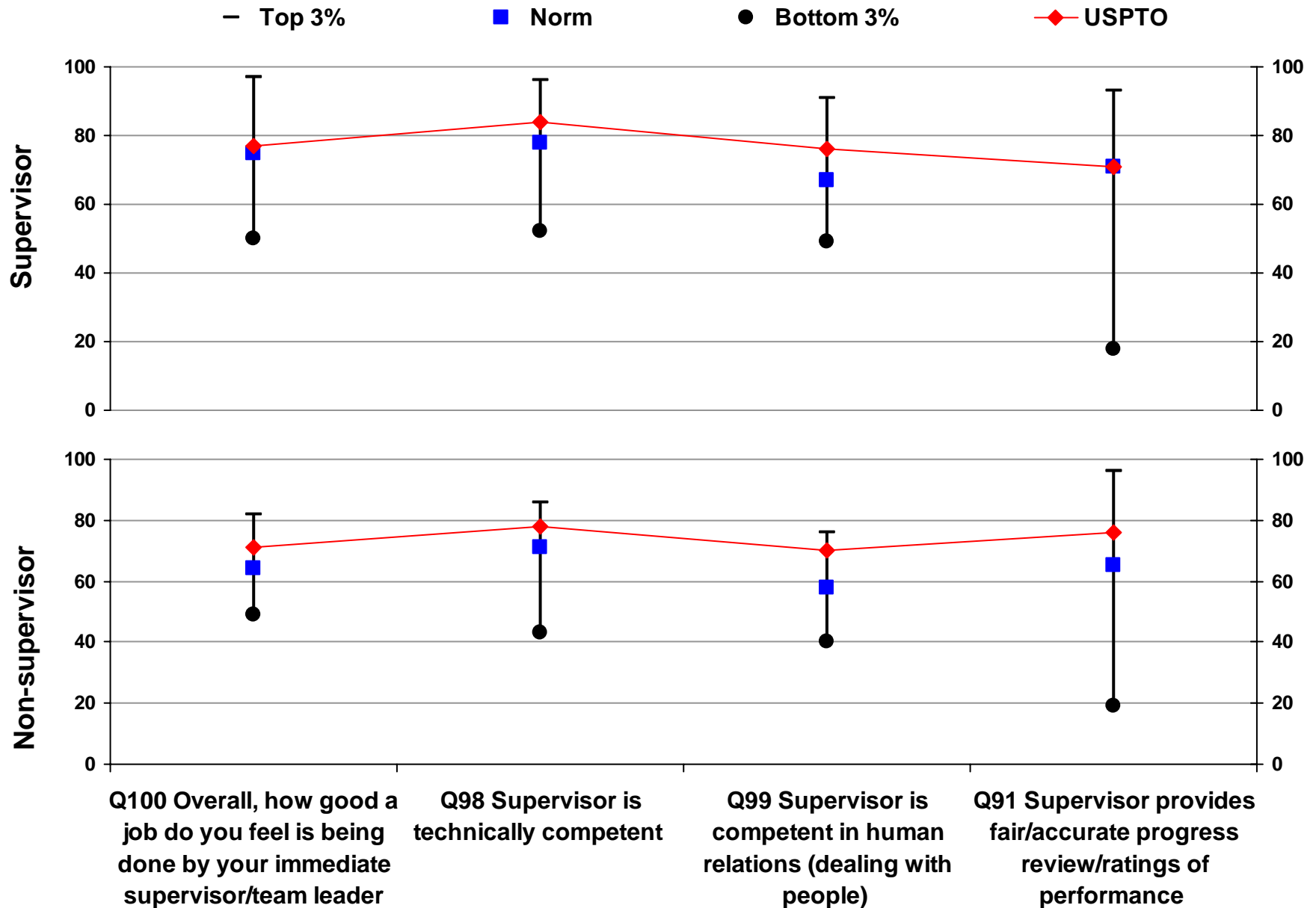
# About Supervision

## Ranked by Total % Favorable



\* Similar but not exact wording in last survey

# About Supervision - Normative Comparison



# About Supervision ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, very favorable results

- Very favorable on receiving help from Supervisor for work-related problems, Supervisor technically competent, communication on what is expected, fair/accurate performance ratings and trust in employees
- Favorable on how good a job is being done by Supervisor, Supervisor is competent in human relations, trust in Supervisor, timely feedback and constructive feedback on job performance

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Mixed favorability between Supervisors and Non-supervisors
- Supervisors more favorable than Non-supervisors, except on Supervisor communication on what is expected in job performance, fair/accurate performance reviews, timely feedback and Supervisor provides constructive suggestions for job performance

## ■ Compared to Other Companies/Agencies

- USPTO more favorable than norms on all four issues

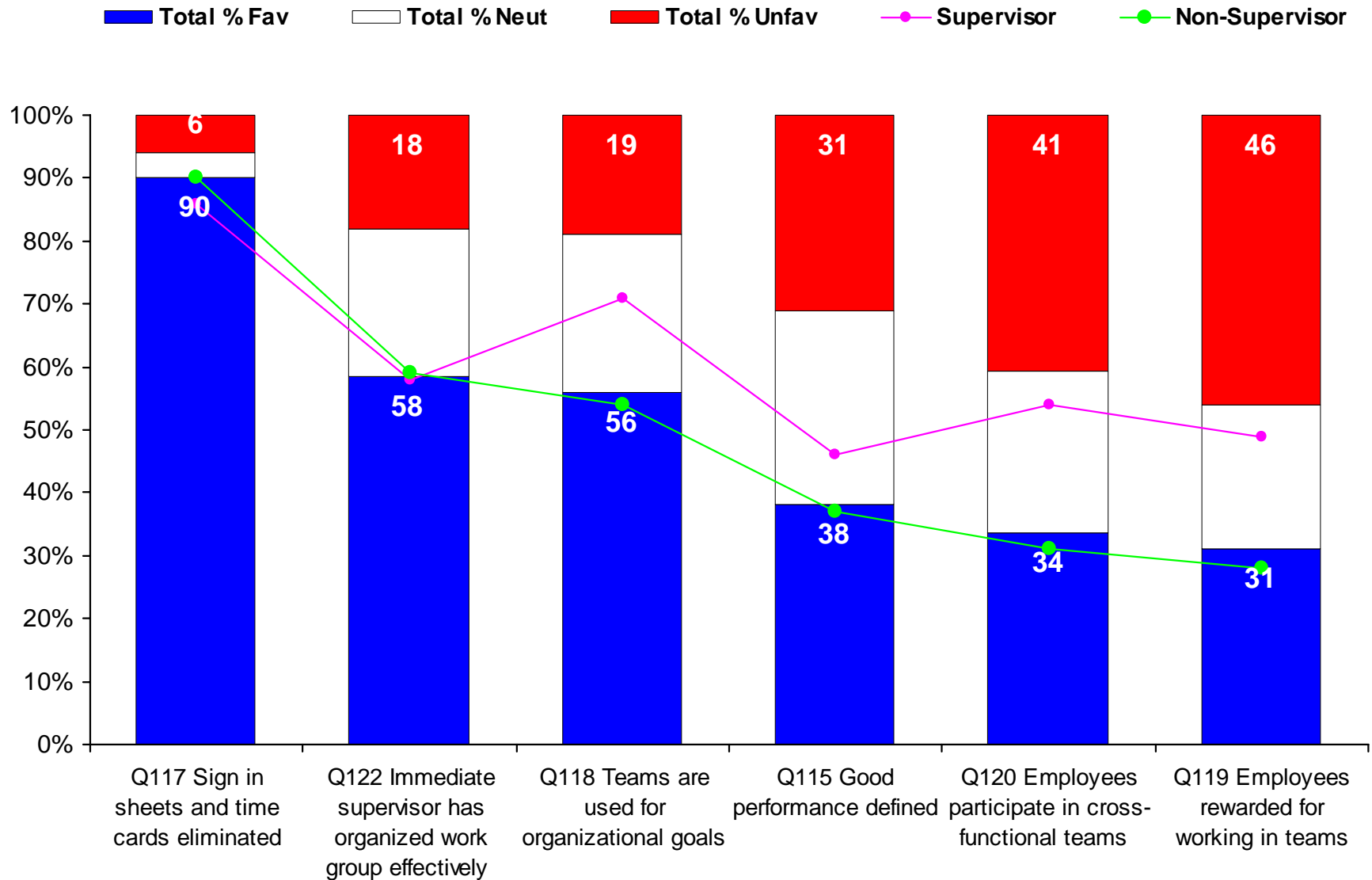
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# NPR Issues

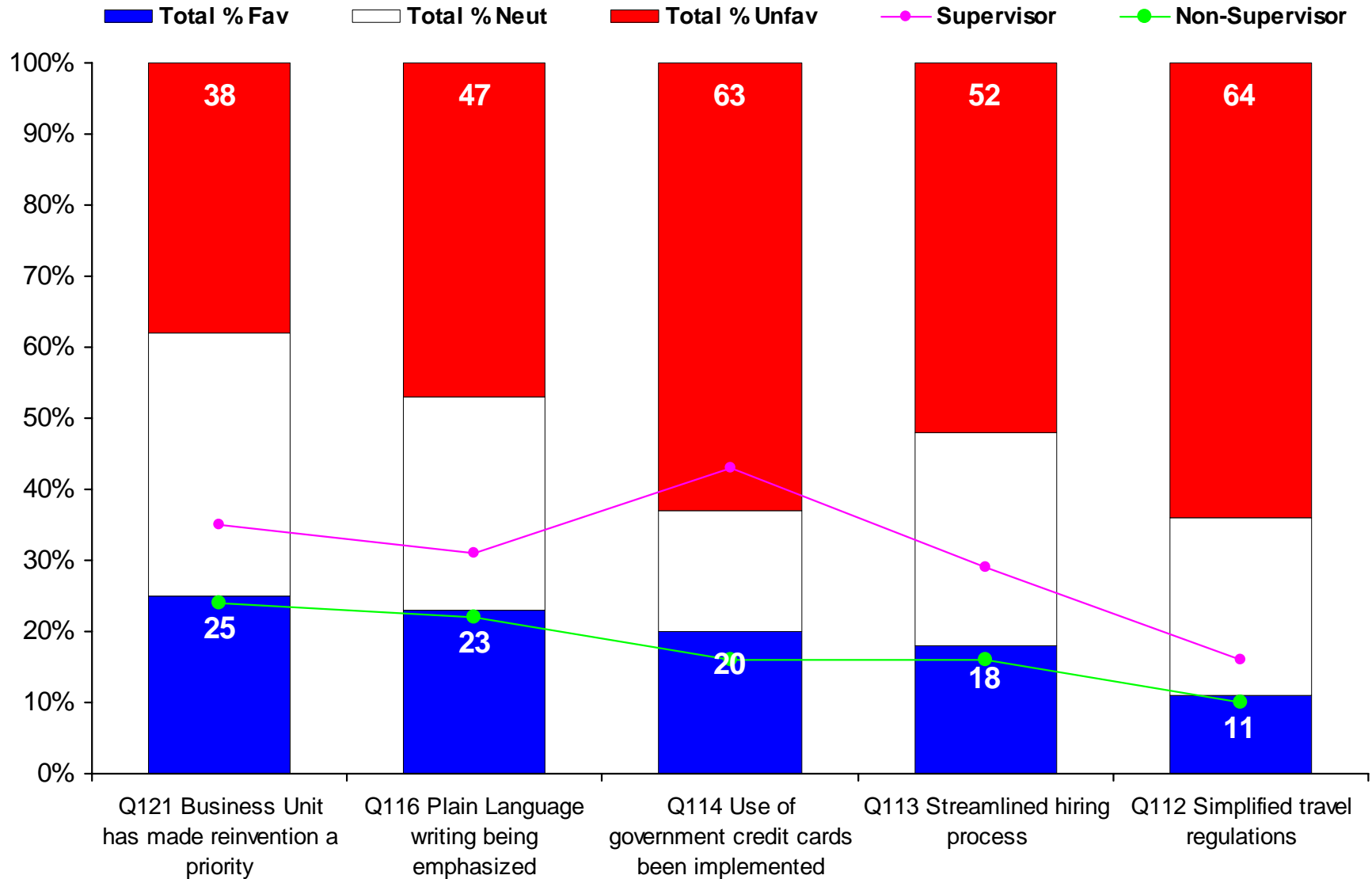
## Ranked by Total % Favorable





# NPR Issues

## Ranked by Total % Favorable



# NPR Issues ... In Sum

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## ■ Overall, mostly unfavorable results

- Very favorable on sign-in sheets being eliminated.
- Moderately favorable on immediate Supervisor organizing work group effectively and teams are used for organizational goals
- Unfavorable/very unfavorable on defining good performance, cross-functional team participation (-41%), rewarded for working in teams (-46%), reinvention is priority, plain language writing (-47%), use of government credit cards (-63%), streamlining hiring process (-52%) and simplified travel regulations (-64%)

## ■ Supervisor/Non-supervisor

- Supervisors more favorable than Non-supervisors, except on sign in sheets being eliminated and immediate Supervisor organizing work group effectively (very close)
- Supervisors especially more favorable than Non-supervisors on using teams for organizational goals, cross-functional team participation, rewarded for working in teams and use of government credit cards

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# Key Strengths

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- Very satisfied with USPTO initiatives (e.g. midday flex procedures, range of work hours, sign in/out procedures, clear mission, vision and values)
- Immediate supervisor ratings (very favorable on a number of questions); above the norms too
- Pride in work and enjoy work
- Customer focus- understanding of customers, service goals aimed at customer expectations and products designed to meet customer needs/expectations
- Treatment of others in Business Unit
- Policies and supervisors are supportive of employees' personal lives/issues

# Key Opportunities

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- Pay- ratings are very unfavorable, especially versus outside companies and other Federal agencies
- Workload, as well as low levels of cooperation between different parts of USPTO, negatively impacting ability to do quality work
- Trust and respect between management and employees is unfavorable; cooperation between management and unions is very unfavorable; communication across USPTO is also very unfavorable
- USPTO striving for excellence and conducting business cost-effectively/efficiently are unfavorable
- Creativity/innovation and risk taking are not encouraged/rewarded in USPTO
- Differences between supervisors and non-supervisors are often larger than is normally seen. Supervisors are often much more favorable than non-supervisors
- A number of NPR questions were rated very unfavorably, including reinvention is priority, plain language writing, streamlining hiring process and simplified travel regulations

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## Write-ins -- Supervisor -- Major Themes

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### A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

Increase the level of pay to be more comparable/give higher bonuses

Give us more time to do a quality job

Provide more administrative support

Look at the structure of the jobs and compensate accordingly

Provide awards based on quality and customer service

Make it easier to remove bad employees/managers

Improve communication between manager and employees

Communicate and focus on goals

# Write-ins -- Supervisor -- Sample Comments

---

## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

- Pay us more money. Twenty to 30 percent more money would at least make our pay half of the other intellectual property professionals.
- Increase the level of pay, particularly at the management level. Managers should be given, at the very least, much higher bonuses particularly when involved in a number of special projects. Managers need more management support.
- Show me the money. I think management should get 10 percent across-the-board pay raises and larger EOY bonuses. Members of the POPA Union turned down a raise; however, management (SPEs) had no say in this. I feel management should have a voice in whether they want a raise or not. My vote is **yes**. Maybe this would send a message to POPA members.
- More comparable pay when compared to the attorneys on the outside.
- The PTO needs to set more realistic expectations in terms of the amount of work that can be accomplished in a given amount of time and to look at the specific needs of each TC and business area in order to set expectations that are realistic for each area.
- As is common in the industry, there does not seem to be enough time to do a complete job on many tasks.
- Reward and encourage quality work. Allow adequate time to do quality work.
- Relieve me entirely of petty administrative duties and meaningless "special projects." SPEs like myself ought to devote all their time and energy to hiring, training, developing and managing the workforce.



# Write-ins -- Supervisor -- Sample Comments

---

## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

- More administrative and technical support for SPEs. Less clerical and administrative tasks for SPEs.
- The PTO should look at the overall structure of jobs. Positions have moved to a more technical aspect in the administration of patent-related activities. Employees should be compensated accordingly.
- Provide awards based on quality. Ratings based less on production and more on quality and customer service.
- The USPTO would really improve if they were to get rid of some of these old managers who are not open to change!
- Improved communication between supervisor and employees, i.e. information sharing. I feel that there is a major disconnect between top, middle and lower levels of management. Decisions are being made that affect everyone, however, only the top level decides without any input or consultation with lower levels. "Information is power" attitude is rampant at PTO. People are afraid to complain because they fear their boss. There is no real career development, mentoring, or encouragement of improved communications. Only in words, but no action.
- Maintain a consistent focus on what the goals and objectives are for a given year, and reduce the continual daily re-prioritization of effort.

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Major Categories

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## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

### %    Category

- 25    Increase the level of pay to be more comparable/competitive
- 23    Provide more time for quality work
- 5    Allow for more training opportunities
- 5    Speed up implementation of telecommuting
- 4    Place more emphasis on quality rather than quantity
- 4    Lower productions, remove the quotas
- 4    Improve the physical work environment
- 3    Increase hourly overtime rate of pay
- 3    Provide more career opportunities/advancement
- 2    Improve communication between management and employees
- 2    Provide us with more office space
- 2    Provide better awards/bonuses for increased productivity
- 2    Show recognition for my hard work
- 2    Provide sufficient supplies and equipment
- 2    Increase the amount of support staff
- 2    Allow us to work more flexible hours
- 2    Help to reduce stress of the job
- 8    Miscellaneous

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

- USPTO needs to pay its employees more. The wage gap between attorneys at the PTO and attorneys on the outside is huge. People are leaving in droves and morale here is at an all-time low.
- Of course a fair pay to the great amount of work that I put in. I think that we get low pay for a high production number, and a product of this is lowering the quality of our work, just to do our numbers. I would be happy if I knew I'd be well paid for all the work that I do. However, I don't see that, and I don't leave because I do enjoy the type of work that I do—being a patent examiner—and of course it is not possible to be a patent examiner outside the USPTO!
- Generally speaking, our starting salaries as attorneys are approximately one third of the starting salaries in the private sector. I would never expect the government to meet that, but the gap should be slightly narrower. Private salaries have increased significantly in the past few years compared to government. The Washington Lawyer recently published an article indicating that in some cases firms are now paying \$125,000 and more to start. Attorneys are leaving the agency every day for the private sector because of the salaries; some leave even before they've been here for a year. Money spent on training is wasted. Even though we are offered overtime, in order to meet or exceed an outstanding rating for production purposes, the overtime does not compensate and unpaid hours are usually incurred as well. Remember that in addition to the high salaries, significant bonuses are paid in the private sector, too.
- Pay me what I am worth. I hold a BBA in Finance and supervisory experience, but have not been promoted in 6 years. I have contributed a great deal of experience and innovation to the PTO and particularly to the business unit to which I am currently assigned. But I feel unappreciated and under-compensated.

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

- Offer a no-strings-attached pay increase to compensate examiners with a market-competitive salary. Right now, an engineer would be foolish to work here unless he or she is looking for patent law experience before making a much bigger salary at a law firm. Unless the engineer was not qualified to get a job in private industry and had to "settle" for a job at the USPTO.
- Provide more time to examine applications. The amount of time currently given is **insufficient** for a **quality** examination of each application.
- Provide enough time to do a good job without adding more duties to the job to complicate achieving the goal of quality and production (i.e., having the examiner do more and more clerical duties which should not be part of the job).
- Make the production requirements reasonable. Allow me the time to do the job properly.
- Immediately allow more time for examination of applications. This would improve examination quality and reduce examiner stress. Also, immediately increase pay (without adding additional responsibilities), which would address the fact that the examiners are underpaid.
- USPTO needs to reevaluate the amount of time given to each examiner, base on that examiner's technology, to dispose of an application. The office needs to take in consideration all of the work tools (Internet, text searching, and catalogs) and the amount of patents available for searching. There are over 6,000,000 published patents. Our production is based on an outdated position factor, which was based on probably only half of the patents available to date. The office wants more work but does not want to grant the time needed to accomplish the work.

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

- Increase training opportunities and the amount of money available for training to be used at the employees' discretion. Encourage and pay for attendance and participation at industry trade shows related to the job. Pay more money.
- Provide better training on appropriate case law that could be used in making rejections, especially Art Unit-specific case law. Or give time to review current case law.
- Provide better mentoring and training. I have been here less than one year and my first year's training has been a semi-disaster. Provide better workspaces. The building is depressing, the bathrooms aren't adequately equipped and materials (pencils, light bulbs) are often in short supply.
- I would be more satisfied with this job if there were an opportunity to work from home at least one day per week.
- I would like to see more work at home for some of the clerical positions. For instance, I am a secretary and it is very possible to do my job from home three days a week. Everything I do is using the computer and telephone. I have analyzed my duties pertaining to my job and other clerical positions and believe it could be a real possibility.
- I would like the opportunity to telecommute. It would make me a happier person at work and at home.
- Quantity is rewarded, but poor quality is not punished. I would like to see more time per application and high producers more closely evaluated in the quality of the work they produce.

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

- Stress more on the quality of patent examining activity and **less** on the assembly-line production numbers. It's totally ridiculous to examine complicated technologies without sufficient time to read and search.
- The production level must be such that examiners can give time to their family and other affairs of life. Stress reducing efforts are badly needed.
- Less production to allow for higher quality of work, and better pay to keep experienced examiners from leaving the PTO. Without experienced examiners we would have no mentors to train new examiners.
- Air quality should be improved as well as air conditioning/heating. Physical work environment is sometimes very uncomfortable. These issues should be addressed before moving to the new location.
- A lawsuit should be in action the way the support staff is being treated. The support staff is using broken furniture, chairs that have been at the PTO since we've moved to the south tower. The professional staff has had numerous chairs as well as new chairs for their guests. When the support staff ask for new chairs, the answer is "it's not in the budget". It's been years now and their answer is still "it's not in the budget".
- The overtime-hourly pay should be increased to the straight-time hourly pay applicable to the grade. This will not only improve employee morale, but also improve productivity of the USPTO as a whole. Now many experienced qualified examiners shy away from overtime, even though they can produce equally quality products without increasing fringe benefits. The awards should be increased depending on standard of quality maintained by the examiner.

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

- Use the competencies of the individual to provide career advancement and not provide opportunities to select few because they appear to be competent. Reward the overall experiences of the individual, and not focus on the government experiences when giving out career advancement opportunities.
- More communication from the leaders when changes are put into place is needed. Employees need to know more about the decisions that are made that affect the entire work unit.
- With the work I do I would like to be in an office that I don't have to share. I am currently sharing an office with a contractor and even though she is not in the office everyday, I have to lock my work up because it's under the privacy act.
- Increase performance bonuses, and provide other types of bonuses for high production and outstanding quality, such as offering additional compensation time as a bonus.
- Showing equity and recognition for the work I do promotion possibilities; detail possibilities. Most of all being able to succeed and be appreciated without having to "play the game" or do "the politics" relative to managers/supervisors.
- Provide sufficient supplies to accomplish the job, including such basics as file folders, pens, and rubber bands. Provide better ventilation, healthier air for the offices. Provide a lunchroom with refrigerator and microwave. Have copy machines routinely serviced. Provide the "Mail@Home" program to all employees who take extended leave—e.g., maternity, sick, etc. and to those on a part-time schedule. Locate working groups on single floors (ours is currently spread over 4 floors of the building).

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## A. What could USPTO do to improve your satisfaction with your job?

- PTO needs major restructuring. Significant increase in competent support staff is essential to permit attorneys to do their jobs. At the moment, the attorneys spend countless hours responding to status inquiries and investigating or fixing errors in other divisions such that attorney work cannot be done in a timely fashion. Paralegal staff is needed. The union maintains that the attorneys do not want paralegals. This is not so. The union does not want paralegals; it wants more attorneys to be hired so that it gets increased union dues. However, a large percentage of the attorneys who are already on board want and need paralegal assistance to streamline the prosecution of applications and permit the PTO to effectively utilize attorney skills. Rather than have attorneys act as file clerks, etc. and then try to do the attorney level job in addition. There are only 24 hours in the day, which even the most team spirited and efficient attorney can work.
- Overall, I am very satisfied with my job here at USPTO, especially in relation to other federal agencies. I feel my job satisfaction would improve if I were allowed to work a less traditional schedule, and take advantage of one of the flexible work schedules. Having more highly trained, competent support staff, who remain in our office for a long period of time would make job a lot more satisfying as well.
- PTO needs to understand that examiners are overworked and stressed out, needing more time (from my vantage point an overall 15% time increase) to do quality work.
- Even and fair assignment of cases based on an examiner's technical expertise. Stop favoritism in case management. Stop assigning 40 cases to one examiner and 4 cases to another.
- New supervisors and team leaders need to be better trained in dealing with people and treating employees like adults, not children.



## Write-ins -- Supervisor -- Major Themes

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### B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

Increase pay to be more comparable/give higher bonuses

Give us more time to do quality work

Improve communication and share information between managers and employees

Reexamine recruitment efforts to hire quality employees

Do an honest review of production

Align the goals of all departments so that we're working towards the same goal

Help to solve union and management problems

Get rid of employees who do not pull their weight

Promote people based on what they can do

Increase staffing of clerical/support positions

Give managers more training to do their jobs

# Write-ins -- Supervisor -- Sample Comments

---

## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- Show that the organization values their employees by giving them higher salaries to retain and recruit high quality motivated people.
- USPTO should give all employees a pay raise to keep good and skillful people in USPTO.
- Starting salaries of the “attorney/advisors trademarks” is too low. I have done some interviewing and hiring of these people for our organization. We see too many lower-skilled applicants. Introduce gain sharing as an additional inducement.
- Give patent examiners more time to examine patent applications and require a more diversified search with training for each tool, East, West, NPL, Internet searching, etc.
- Make realistic assessments of the work to be accomplished in the time allotted and with the money and human resources available.
- Collectively work together and communicate with each other. In order for the organization or even the Agency to make positive changes there has to be communication and people working together. At a minimum, organizations need to share with each other the activities that are taking place which impact other areas.
- Improve communications among employees, especially between managers and bargaining unit members. Increase the sharing of knowledge between employees at all levels. Provide more time to put out each unit of work products. Increase training options both inside and outside the organization.
- Better communication. Get input from employees prior to making a decision, instead of after the fact.

# Write-ins -- Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- Re-examine recruitment efforts to include more job fairs with professional organizations including specific ones like the American Physical Society. Maintain presence at universities even if there are no vacancies and expand the list of schools to include more HSIs, HACUs, and HBCUs.
- As an organization I think you need to hire more people with a vision, people that have not been stuck in their ways for years and years. Management old and new needs to take the new supervisor's certification classes. I recently completed the courses and they were excellent. People need to be properly trained in whatever their job is. I would like to see people promoted on what they can do, not just because they have been in a position for a long time and they have waited their turn. I would like to see more awards created.
- Continue to explore ways of attracting and retaining top-notch staff.
- Do an honest and real review of production. We should come up with an accurate estimate of how much (in time as well as in money) it costs to produce a quality examination and ask our customers what they want. Hiding behind the fact that employees earn awards is not facing reality.
- The agency needs to take some of the emphasis off getting patents out the door and pay more than lip service to improving the quality of patents. Some ways to do this is to make sure the agency has the very best search systems, the most comprehensive databases of prior art, and examiners that are well trained in using the equipment to search for the best art. I think the agency's relationship with the patent bar works to the detriment of patent quality and a better public image. We need to be less involved with the patent bar and more inclined to control our own destiny.

# Write-ins -- Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- More communication and cooperation between business units. Less hidden agendas and a top down business plan imposed by the director to achieve a unified vision rather than a plan cobbled together by units with competing goals. In other words, an autocratic CEO to force us to meet his or her objectives.
- I feel that the PAP plans for the examiners, technical support, SPEs, directors and upper management need to have similar goals. It is difficult to meet my rating goals when the employees that I manage have different goals than myself.
- The union has to find a way to become more flexible and open minded to help solve some of the issues at USPTO. While management is trying to look forward, the union is still thinking like it is 1970.
- The unions should actively try to cooperate with management instead of trying to put up roadblocks and get everything they can from management without giving anything themselves.
- Management needs more authority to remove people from the workplace who clearly cannot perform the job. Such cannot be done in view of the power of the union.
- Maintain high standards of quality. Provide the appropriate training and demand results. Promotions are based almost exclusively on quantity. We need to move the focus to the knowledge and skill of the examiners and have quality weigh more in the promotion process.
- Improve and increase staffing of clerical positions. They are often vacant for too long which causes perpetual understaffing.

## Write-ins -- Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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### B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- The opportunity for advancement is relatively good at PTO, however there is a lack of a true training track for those people that possess skills for management. There are members of management that are in over their heads because of a lack of any formal training prior to their being selected to serve in their present capacity. The PTO is now giving examiners extensive training on automation tools and legal skills to do their job better. Still there is no training to prepare a person interested in advancement to management for that next step. The long term results is that we will have people in jobs that either can't do what is needed and perform at an unsatisfactory level or will miss out on people with good skill because they are afraid of the responsibility of management due to this lack of proper training.

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Major Categories

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## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

### %   Category

- 14 Place more emphasis on quality rather than quantity
- 14 Provide more time for quality work
- 10 Increase the level of pay to be more competitive/comparable
- 7 Listen and respond to employee ideas/complaints
- 7 Be honest, fair and treat us with respect
- 5 Provide better training, especially for new examiners
- 5 Improve communication between management to employees/share information
- 5 Work on cooperation between the union and management
- 5 Revise the current production system
- 3 Offer more opportunity for telecommuting
- 2 Provide us with better equipment
- 2 Hire more support staff, take away the administrative time wasters
- 2 Encourage more teamwork
- 2 Management training should be required, especially in regards to people skills
- 2 Decrease employee turnover rate
- 2 Eliminate paper applications, move to electronic only
- 2 Give more incentives to examiners
- 2 Return to the public servant concept

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- Return to emphasis on quality and stop trying to be all things to all people.
- Make quality job number one. Helping our customers obtain patents is meaningless if the patents are not well examined. Lip service is given to quality and quantity, which is the real thing.
- Stop providing the double talk about quality. I have been in more than one forum where goals and promises are set forth that are in conflict with doing quality work. In the long run, if you want better quality then you cannot force out more quantity per examiner. In addition, the office line “automation should result in more efficiency” ignores the fact that there is constantly more and more art to search. Automation changes just about keep up with the information explosion.
- I wish management would stop asserting that quality is their number one priority. It clearly is not. Management’s number one priority is production. The production goals are simply too high to provide for quality patent examination.
- Give us time to read, assimilate and respond to all of the information that we receive through e-mail and other sources. We receive much information and a variety of such, however, we are overwhelmed because of the necessity of trying to keep up with the information processes, changes, training requirements and our production quotas.
- Reevaluate production demands on examiners. With the number of examiners recently hired, this would be an ideal time to **give examiners more time per case** to do a reasonable search and to write up detailed and clear office actions for our customers. With the addition of so many new examiners, we could still maintain or even reduce pendency. In addition, more time per case would reduce stress and very likely improve employee retention (since numerous examiners have left due to the stress caused by high production demands).

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- Currently, the time allotted to do work is not comparable to the pay received. And yet, we are expected to do more. The biggest thing the PTO management can do is "**be fair**".
- Definitely a 10% to 15% overall salary increase is required to compensate for the huge salary gap that exists between the private industry and the government, especially in the area of the intellectual property. A special scale for USPTO engineers/examiners is strongly recommended to at least put all engineers in a special scale like their counterparts in other government agencies. This will improve the retention problem.
- Increase pay. Come up to comparable pay scales for the private IP sector. Quit losing trained and qualified people to the private sector.
- Improve compensation. First-year associates in the private sector are paid more than my current salary. I have been here many years.
- Pay should be increased to be more in line with private practice. We are losing too many quality people to law firms. While I realize we can't pay as much, if we increased pay 10-15%, when coupled with our other benefits, I believe that we could retain more people.
- Listen to workers and most importantly **respond** to workers. There are many ways to provide feedback, but most of the time I get no response. More pay to keep the quality examiners. Come to the realization that quality and quantity are inversely proportional!
- Listen to examiner's complaints, in particular about pay and productivity. We are overworked and underpaid; the pay is an **insult** to common sense, and electronic searching makes our job more difficult, not less.



# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- A true commitment to improvement in quality would take into account suggestions made by the examiners. I believe that since we are the ones feeling the direct pressure to improve quality, we have insight into where improvements can be made to most effectively improve quality.
- Treat the examiners with the respect we deserve and used to get. Give us some managers that are able to get the job done right.
- Treat everyone fair. This means hire people because they are qualified and not because somebody knew somebody or because I don't like you or the way you act, dress, etc. Please hire more **competent supervisors and managers**.
- Have leaders with integrity and honesty and who show appreciation to honest working employees and willing to upgrade their employees.
- Better training for new examiners. Chemical examiners are lumped together with Biotech; therefore, the training materials are hard to understand.
- Although examiner training hours have increased, the quality of the training leaves something to be desired. There does not appear to be a program in place to check the quality of the training, (besides the training surveys at the end of the class, the students in a class are not always the best judge of whether training has been effectively administered) or to train the trainers. Presentations appear to have been completed the night before or up to the minute of the presentation.
- Clearly communicate upper management's strategic vision. Then at all lower levels communicate the tactical and operational goals that support the strategic ones.

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- Try to increase communications of policies and information in a timely manner.
- Please work on labor-management cooperation. There seems to be a lack of cooperation and trust.
- The USPTO needs to work better with its unions. There is a strikingly adversarial relationship between management and the unions. Management keeps trying to squeeze additional blood out of a stone by means of production. Accordingly, the unions are suspicious of management initiatives. The environment is not conducive to cooperative negotiations.
- **Rethink** the current production system, which was created in the 1970's or before, when there was very little computer technology to research. Now, there is so much to research, **but no corresponding additional time** given for it, to adequately reflect the "information explosion". As such, USPTO is more concerned with quantity (as demonstrated by the production system) than with the quality of the work done.
- Revise the current production system, especially for new patent examiners. Allow more time to train them and let them have more time to do the proper job and not just producing a production number.
- Offer a work at home program for everyone, not just Trademark attorneys.
- Consider expanding work at home options.
- Always explore new technologies and bring them into USPTO instead of continue using some tools (technologies) that were probably better years ago and have since been surpassed by other tools today.

# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- Reward quality instead of quantity. Provide better equipment to employees. Provide adequate time to perform quality work. Increase pay to competitive levels. Provide more training.
- Hire a person just to look for lost or misplaced cases, especially amended cases.
- The PTO needs to unfreeze the hiring of clerical support staff because this part of the processing of applications for Patents is fraught with delays and errors due to overburdening of the present clerical support level. It is good that many aspects of this paper processing have been contracted out. However, the area that remains a clear problem is that knowledgeable clerical, paralegal type support, which is not amenable to unskilled contractor work causes a high level of errors and delays due to overburdening of the people that we have in this area.
- Take out the production system and implement team examination by appointments for cases that require such detailed examining, at the discretion of the examiner. Have other times available to conduct Art Unit meetings of examination related difficulties and develop search strategies as a team.
- The USPTO should put more emphasis on training their supervisors on how to treat their employees and everyone should be on the same accord as far as getting the work done.
- Good examiners are always in demand in private practice. Management should make a realistic effort to make staying at the PTO an attractive proposition for experienced examiners.
- Eliminate some supervisors who do not help the workload; they are always in the office with their door closed.

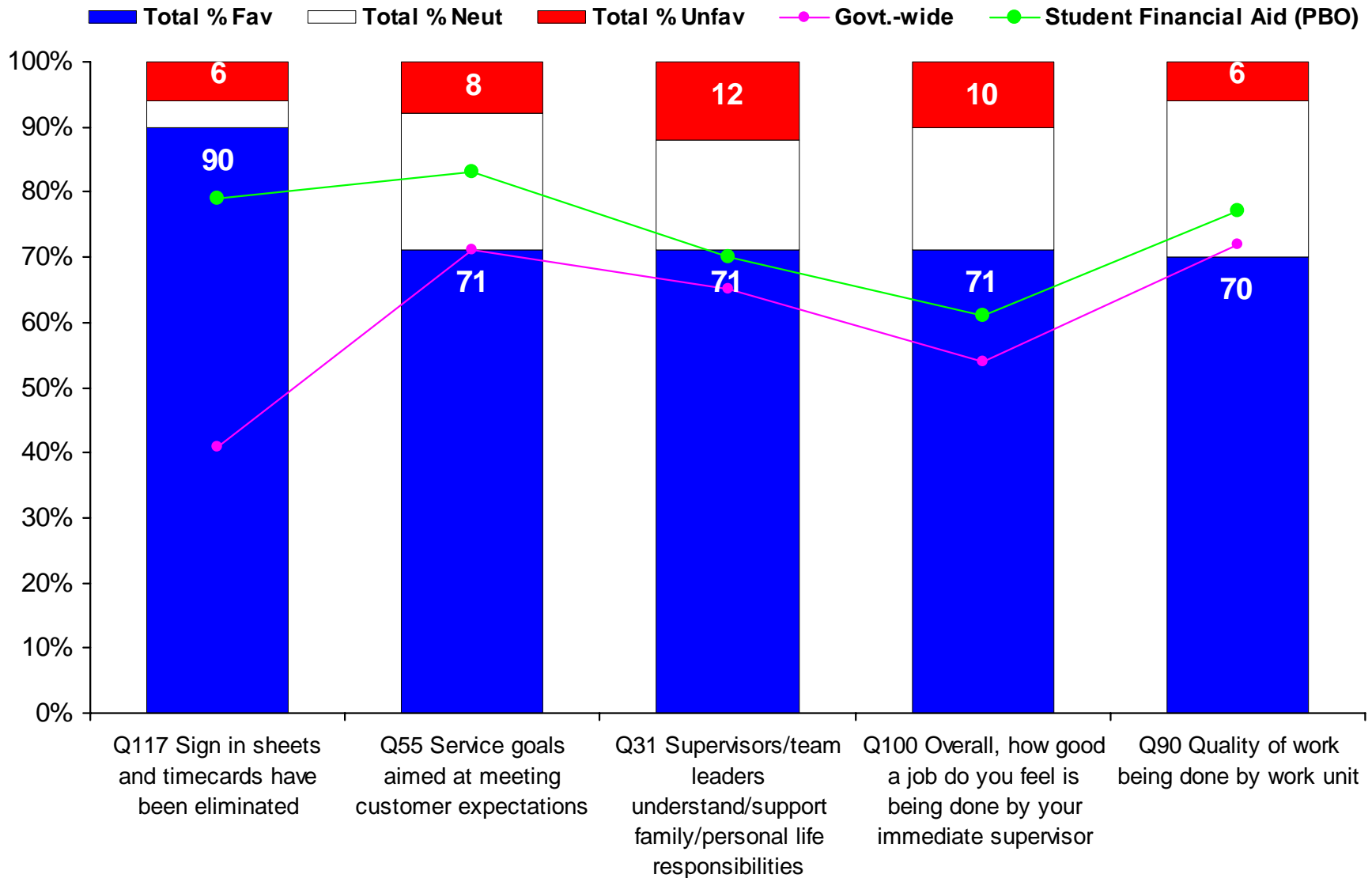
# Write-ins -- Non-Supervisor -- Sample Comments

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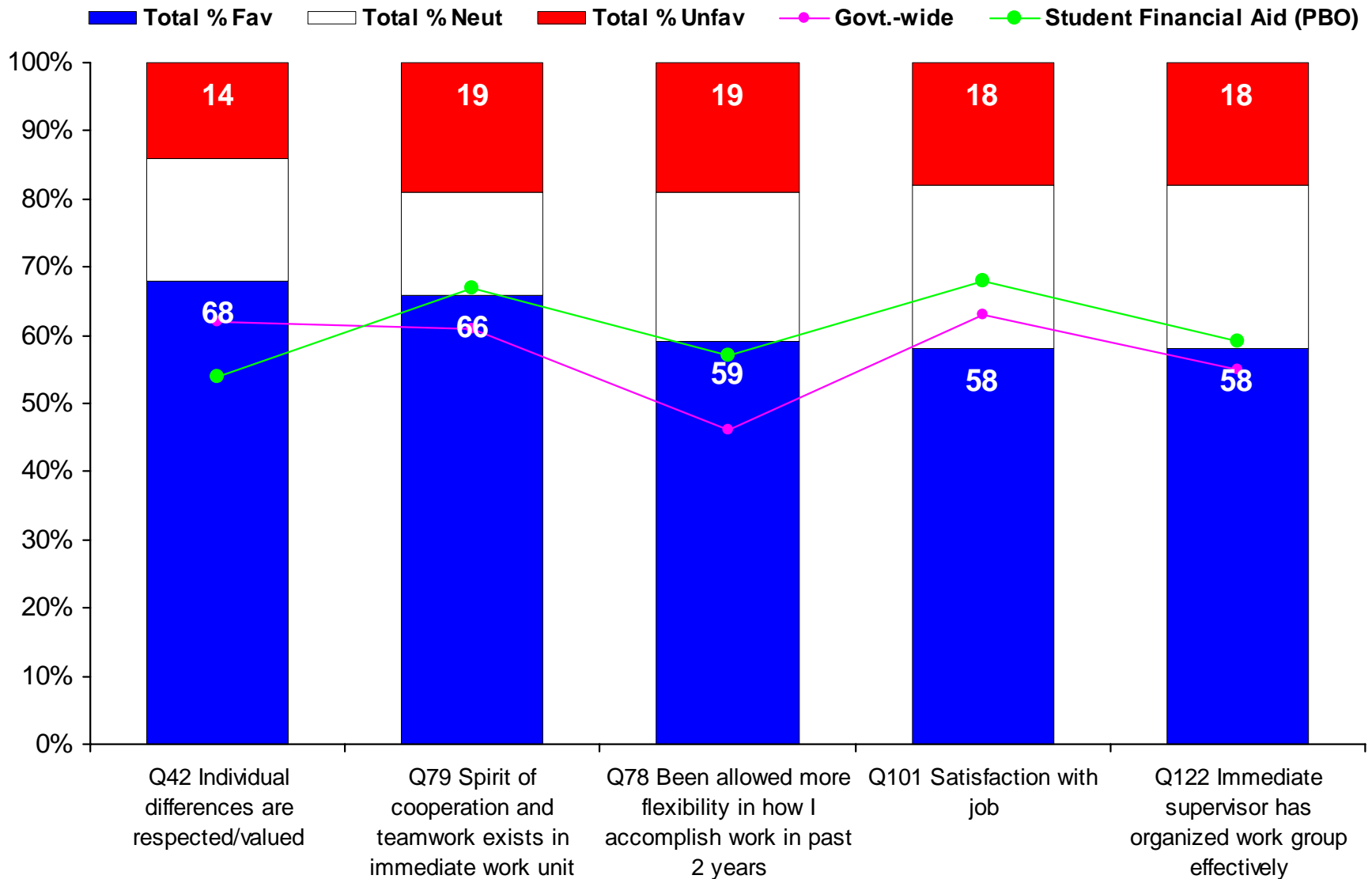
## B. What should the USPTO do to improve as an organization?

- Speaking from a Trademark point of view, the organization seems to be in need of an overhaul. The practices and procedures that worked when the organization was smaller cannot deal with the onslaught of demands caused by the current market. Obviously, the growth trends of today and tomorrow will dictate the need for change. The creation of two fully electronic offices within Trademarks is a good beginning. Ultimately, the whole office should follow suit. Once electronic filings become the norm, the current requirements for additional space will ease. The savings on creating physical work spaces can then be funneled into better computer systems and electronic equipment which will allow employees to work from their own personal residences or while traveling. Additionally, the performance of certain support staff duties will become less time consuming since paper files will not have to be constantly carted from one location to the next. Lost files and misplaced correspondence will cease to be an issue once the appropriate electronic safe guards are put into place.
- Provide better both monetary and moral incentives to examiners, mostly senior examiners so that they do not leave.
- Return to the concept that we are public servants dedicated to serving the interests of the people of the United States of America. Rather than being mercenaries to those who pay the most for our services.
- Promote people within who have the knowledge and skills for jobs. Stop designing jobs for specific individuals by crafting job announcements with educational requirements that are not needed to do a job. This hinders those within. Provide career ladder positions.
- Give the employees with the experience and background a change to utilize their knowledge to improve the organization through career training appointments and training.

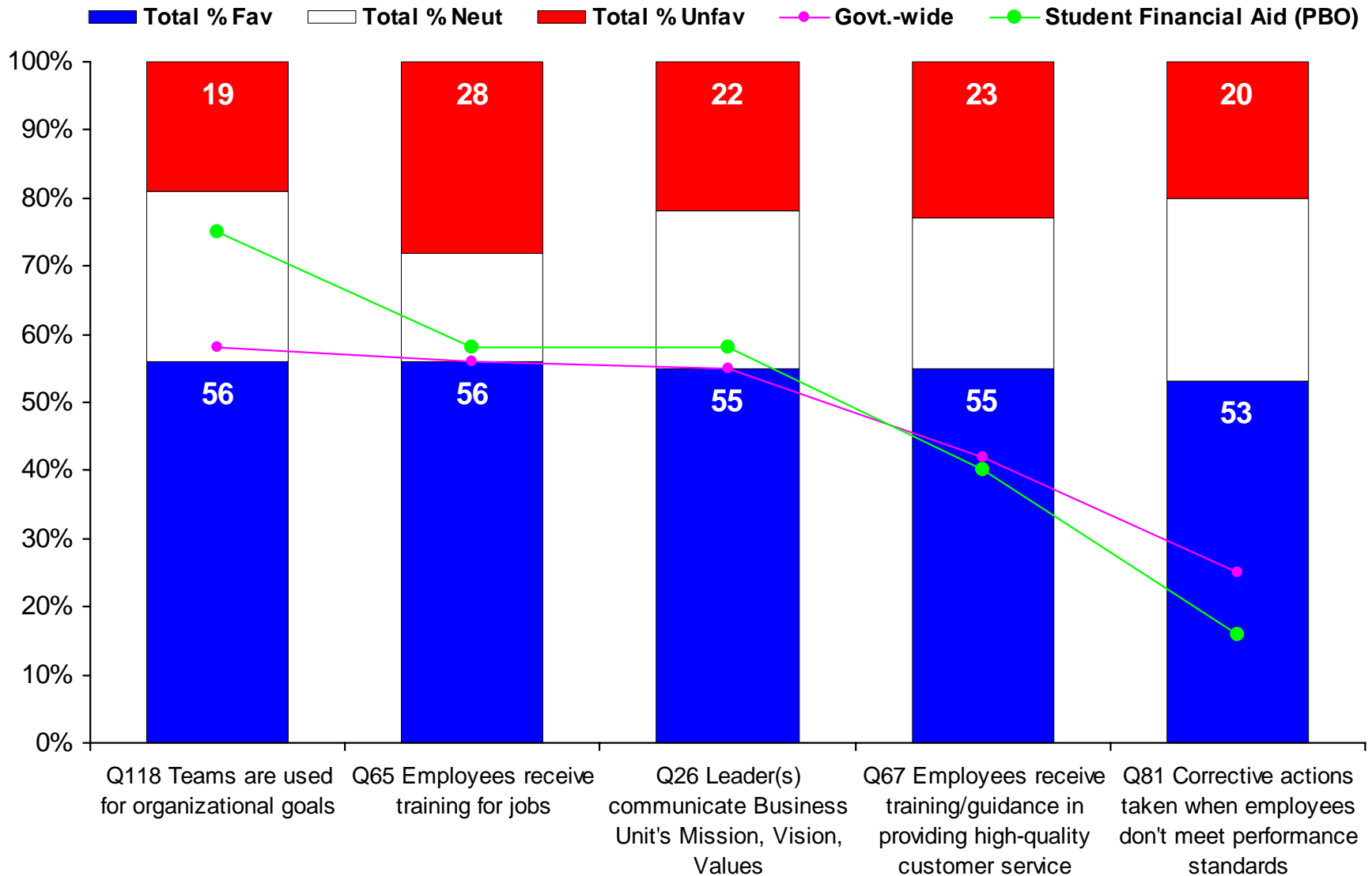
## Appendix A -- Comparison to Government-wide NPR Survey



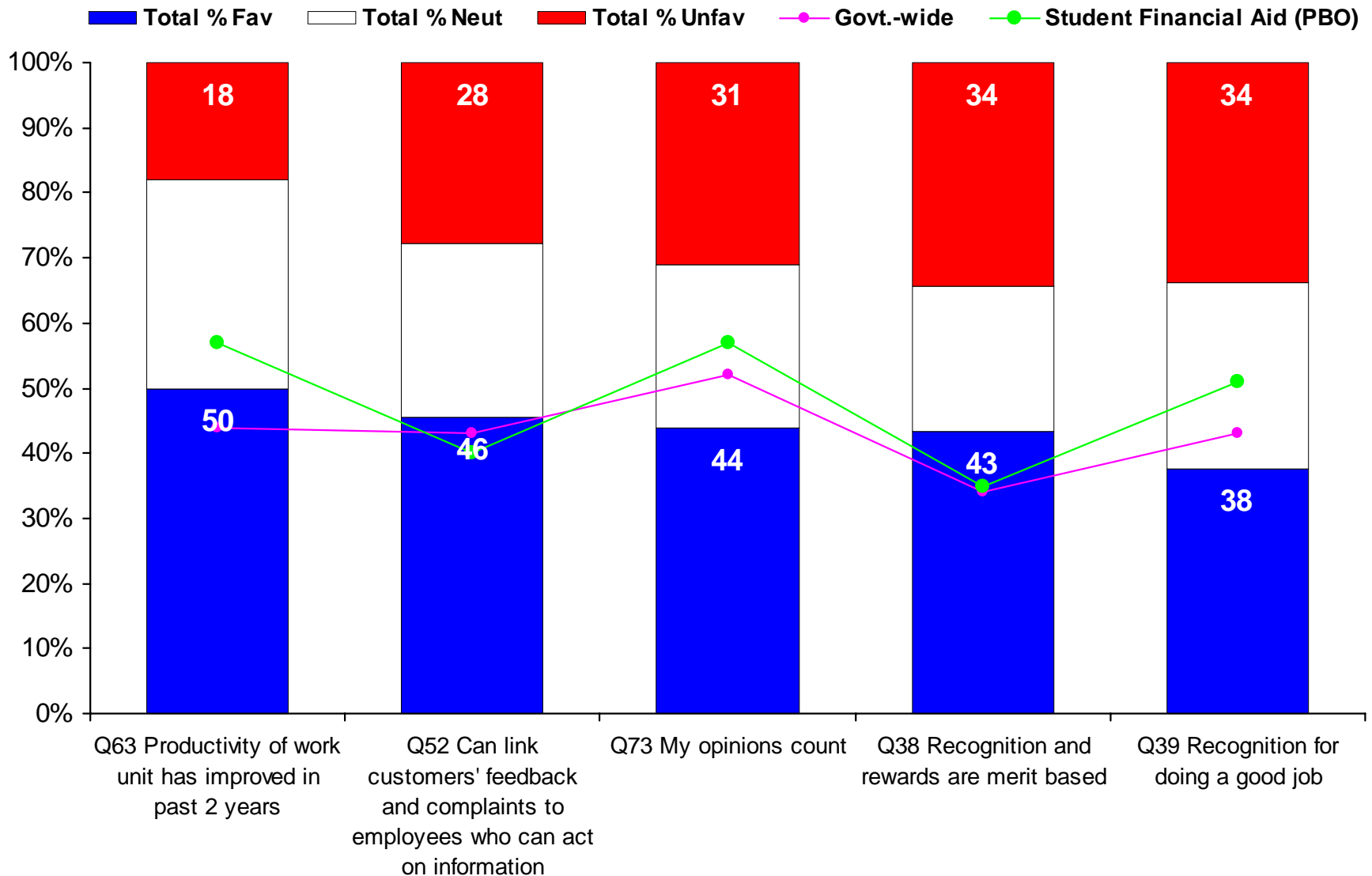
## Appendix A -- Comparison to Government-wide NPR Survey



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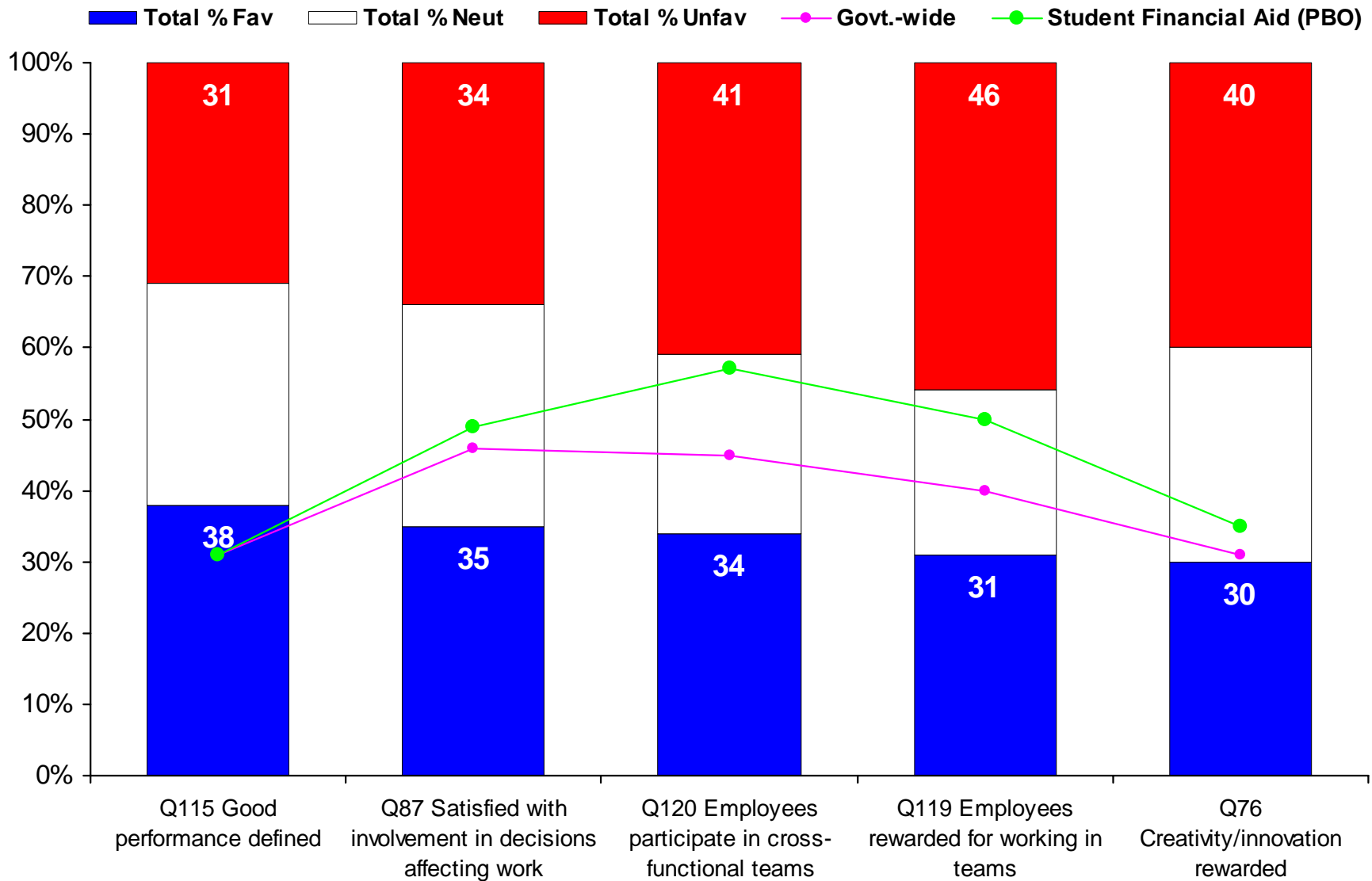


## Appendix A -- Comparison to Government-wide NPR Survey





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